A

LETTER

TO

H. REPTON, Esq.

ON THE APPLICATION OF

THE PRACTICE AS WELL AS THE PRINCIPLES

OF

Landscape-Painting to *Landscape-Gardening.*

INTENDED AS

A SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

"ESSAY ON THE PICTURESQUE."

By UVEDALE PRICE, Esq.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

Mr. Repton's Letter to Mr. Price.

THE SECOND EDITION.

=HEREFORD=

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A

LETTER

TO

UVEDALE PRICE, Esq.

A

LETTER, &c.

SIR,

I AM much obliged by your attention, in having directed your bookſeller to ſend me an early copy of your ingenious work. It has been my companion during a long journey, and has furniſhed me with entertainment, ſimilar to that which I have occaſionally had the honour to experience, from your animated converſation on the ſubject. In the general principles and theory of the art, which you have conſidered with ſo much attention, I flatter myſelf that we agree; and that our difference of opinion relates only to the propriety, or, perhaps, poſſibility, of reducing them to practice.

I am obliged both to Mr. Knight, and to yourſelf, for mentioning my name as an exception* to the taſteleſs herd of Mr. Brown's followers. But while you are pleaſed to allow me ſome of the qualities neceſſary to my profeſſion, you ſuppoſe me deficient in others, and therefore ſtrongly recommend the ſtudy of "what the higher "artiſts have done, both in their pictures "and drawings:" a branch of knowledge which I have always conſidered to be not leſs eſſential to my profeſſion than hydraulics or ſurveying; and without which I ſhould never have preſumed to arrogate to myſelf, the title of "*Landſcape Gar-*"*dener,*" which you obſerve is, "*a title* "*of no ſmall pretenſion.*"

* Should the new ſyſtem of improving, "by neglect and "accident," ever prevail ſo far as to render this beautiful kingdom one huge picturesque foreſt, I doubt whether ſuch mention of my name may not be attributed to the ſame delicate motives which you ſo ingeniouſly aſſign in excuſe for Mr. Maſon's praiſe of Brown.

It is difficult to define GOOD TASTE in any of the polite arts; and amongſt the reſpective profeſſors of them, I am ſorry to obſerve that it is ſeldom allowed in a rival; while thoſe who are not profeſſors, but, being free from the buſineſs or diſſipation of life, have found leiſure to excel in any one of theſe arts, generally find time alſo to cultivate the others; and becauſe there really does exiſt ſome affinity betwixt them, they are apt to ſuppoſe it ſtill greater.*

During the pleaſant hours we paſſed together amidſt the romantic ſcenery of the Wye, I do remember my acknowledging that an enthuſiaſm for the pictureſque, had

* Thus *Muſic* and *Poetry* are often coupled together, although very few inſtances occur in which they are made to aſſimilate; becauſe the melody of an air is ſeldom adapted either to the rhyme or meaſure of the verſe. In like manner, *Poetry* and *Painting* are often joined; but the canvas rarely embodies thoſe figurative perſonages to advantage, which the poet's enthuſiaſm preſents to the reader's imagination.

originally

originally led me to fancy greater affinity betwixt *Painting* and *Gardening*, than I found to exiſt after more mature conſideration, and more practical experience; becauſe, *in whatever relates to man, propriety and convenience are not leſs objects of good taſte, than pictureſque effect*; and a beautiful garden ſcene is not more defective becauſe it would not look well on canvas, than a didactic poem becauſe it neither furniſhes a ſubject for the painter or the muſician. There are a thouſand ſcenes in nature to delight the eye, beſides thoſe which may be copied as pictures; and indeed one of the keeneſt obſervers of pictureſque ſcenery (Mr. Gilpin), has often regretted that few are capable of being ſo repreſented, without conſiderable licenſe and alteration.

If therefore the painter's landſcape be indiſpenſible to the perfection of garden-

ing,

ing, it would ſurely be far better to paint it on canvas at the end of an avenue, as they do in Holland, than to ſacrifice the health, cheerfulneſs, and comfort of a country reſidence, to the wild but pleaſing ſcenery of a painter's imagination.

There is no exerciſe ſo pleaſing to the inquiſitive mind, as that of deducing theories and ſyſtems from favourite opinions: I was therefore peculiarly intereſted and gratified by your ingenious diſtinction betwixt the beautiful and the picturesque; but I cannot admit the propriety of its application to landſcape gardening; becauſe beauty, and not "pic-" tureſqueneſs," is the chief object of modern improvement: for although ſome nurſerymen, or labourers in the kitchen garden, may have badly copied Mr. Brown's manner, yet the unprejudiced eye will diſcover innumerable beauties in the works

of

of that great ſelf-taught maſter: and ſince you have ſo judiciouſly marked the diſtinction betwixt the *beautiful* and the *pictureſque*, they will perhaps diſcover, that, where the habitation and convenience of man can be improved by *beauty*, "*pictu-* "*reſqueneſs*" may be transferred to the ragged gipſy, with whom "the wild aſs, the "Pomeranian dog, and ſhaggy goat" are more in harmony, than "the ſleek-coated "horſe," or the dappled deer,* which have never till lately been diſcovered, when "in groups, to be meagre and ſpotty."

Amidſt the ſeverity of your ſatire on Mr. Brown and his followers, I cannot be ignorant that many pages are directly pointed at my opinions; although with more delicacy than your friend Mr. Knight

* The continual moving and lively agitation obſervable in herds of deer, is one of the circumſtances which painting cannot repreſent; but it is not leſs an object of beauty and cheerfulneſs in park ſcenery.

has

has ſhewn, in the attempt to make me an object of ridicule, by miſquoting my unpubliſhed MSS.

It is the misfortune of every liberal art to find amongſt its profeſſors ſome men of uncouth manners; and ſince my profeſſion has more frequently been practiſed by mere day labourers, and perſons of no education, it is the more difficult to give it that rank amongſt the polite arts, which I conceive it ought to hold. Yet it is now become my duty to ſupport its reſpectability, ſince you attack the very exiſtence of that profeſſion, at the head of which, both you and Mr. Knight have the goodneſs to ſay that I am deſervedly placed.

Your new theory of deducing *landſcape gardening* from *painting* is ſo plauſible, that, like many other philoſophic theories, it may captivate and miſlead, unleſs duly examined by the teſt of experience and practice.

practice. I cannot help ſeeing great affinity betwixt deducing gardening from the painter's ſtudies of wild nature, and deducing government from the uncontrouled opinions of man in a ſavage ſtate. The neatneſs, ſimplicity, and elegance of Engliſh gardening, have acquired the approbation of the preſent century, as the happy medium betwixt the wildneſs of nature and the ſtiffneſs of art; in the ſame manner as the Engliſh conſtitution is the happy medium betwixt the liberty of ſavages, and the reſtraint of deſpotic government; and ſo long as we enjoy the benefit of theſe middle degrees betwixt extremes of each, let experiments of untried theoretical improvement be made in ſome other country.

So far I have endeavoured to defend Mr. Brown with reſpect to the general principle of improvement. But it is neceſſary

ceſſary to enter ſomething farther into the detail of his practice of what has been ludicrouſly called *clumping* and *belting*. No man of taſte can heſitate betwixt the natural group of trees, compoſed of various growths, and that formal patch of firs which too often disfigure a lawn, under the name of a clump: but the moſt certain method of producing a group of five or ſix trees, is to plant fifty or ſixty within the ſame fence; and this Mr. Brown frequently adviſed, with a mixture of firs to protect and ſhelter the young trees during their infancy; but, unfortunately, the neglect or bad taſte of his employers would occaſionally ſuffer the firs to remain long after they had completed their office as nurſes; while others have actually planted *firs only* in ſuch clumps, totally miſconceiving Mr. Brown's original intention. Nor is it uncommon to ſee theſe black patches ſurrounded

rounded by a painted rail, a quick hedge, or even a ſtone wall, inſtead of that temporary fence which is always an object of neceſſity, and not of choice.

If a large expanſe of lawn happens unfortunately to have no ſingle trees or groups to diverſify its ſurface, it is ſometimes neceſſary to plant them; and if the ſize and quantity of theſe clumps or maſſes bear proportion to the extent of lawn, or ſhape of the ground, they are ſurely leſs offenſive than a multitude of ſtarving ſingle trees, ſurrounded by heavy cradle fences, which are often dotted over the whole ſurface of a park. I will grant, that where a few old trees can be preſerved of former hedge-rows, the clump is ſeldom neceſſary, except in a flat country where the ſurface of the lawn may be varied by thick maſſes, whoſe effect cannot be produced by ſingle trees. The clump therefore is never to be

be conſidered as an object of preſent beauty, but as a more certain expedient for producing future beauties, than young trees, which very ſeldom grow when expoſed ſingly to the wind and ſun.

I ſhall now proceed to defend my predeceſſor's *belt*, on the ſame principle of expedience. Although I perfectly agree, that, in certain ſituations, it has been executed in a manner to be tireſome in itſelf, and highly injurious to the general ſcenery; yet there are many places in which no method could be more fortunately deviſed, than a belt or boundary of plantation to encompaſs the park or lawn. It is often too long, and always too narrow, but from my own experience I am convinced, that notwithſtanding the obſtinacy and preſumption of which Mr. Brown is accuſed, he had equal difficulties to ſurmount from the profuſion, and the parſimony of his employers,

employers, or he would never have conſented to thoſe meagre girdles of plantation which are extended for many miles in length, although not above twenty or thirty yards in breadth.

Let me briefly trace the origin, intention, and uſes of a belt. The comfort and pleaſure of a country reſidence requires, that ſome ground, in proportion to the ſize of the houſe, ſhould be ſeparated from the adjoining ploughed fields; this incloſure, call it park, or lawn, or pleaſure ground, muſt have the air of being appropriated to the peculiar uſe and pleaſure of the proprietor. The love of ſecluſion and ſafety is not leſs natural to man than that of liberty, and I conceive it would be almoſt as painful to live in a houſe without the power of ſhutting any door, as in one with all the doors locked: the mind is equally diſpleaſed with the exceſs of liberty,

berty, or of reſtraint, when either is too apparent. From hence proceeds the neceſſity of incloſing a park, and alſo of hiding the boundary by which it is incloſed; and a plantation being the moſt natural means of hiding a park pale, nothing can be more obvious than a drive or walk in ſuch a plantation. If this belt be made of one uniform breadth, with a drive as uniformly ſerpentining through the middle of it, I am ready to allow that the way can only be intereſting to him who wiſhes to examine the growth of his young trees; to every one elſe it muſt be tedious, and its dullneſs will increaſe in proportion to its length. On the contrary, if the plantation be judiciouſly made of various breadth, if its outline be adapted to the natural ſhape of the ground, and if the drive be conducted irregularly through its courſe, ſometimes totally within the dark ſhade, ſometimes

ſkirting

ſkirting ſo near its edge as to ſhow the different ſcenes betwixt the trees, and ſometimes quitting the wood entirely to enjoy the unconfined view of diſtant proſpects,—it will ſurely be allowed that ſuch a plantation is the beſt poſſible means of connecting and diſplaying the various pleaſing points of view, at a diſtance from each other, within the limits of the park;—and the only juſt objection that can be urged, is—where ſuch points do not occur often enough, and where the length of a drive is ſubſtituted for its variety.

This Letter, which has been written, at various opportunities, during my journey into Derbyſhire, has inſenſibly grown to a bulk which I little expected when I began it; I ſhall therefore cauſe a few copies to be printed, to ſerve as a general defence of an art, which, I truſt, will not be totally ſuppreſſed, although you ſo earneſtly

neſtly recommend every gentleman to become his own landſcape gardener. With equal propriety might every gentleman become his own architect, or even his own phyſician: in ſhort, there is nothing that a man of abilities may not do for himſelf, if he will dedicate his whole attention to that ſubject only. But the life of man is not ſufficient to excel in all things; and as "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing," ſo the profeſſors of every art, as well as that of medicine, will often find that the moſt difficult caſes are thoſe, where the patient has begun by *quacking himſelf.*

The general rules of art are to be acquired by ſtudy, but the manner of applying them can only be learned by practice; yet there are certain good plans which, like certain good medicines, may be proper in almoſt every caſe; it was therefore no greater impeachment of Mr. Brown's taſte

to anticipate his belt in a naked country, than it would be to a phyſician to gueſs, before he ſaw the patient, that he would preſcribe James's powders in a fever.

In the volume of my works now in the preſs, I have endeavoured to trace the difference betwixt *painting* and *gardening*, as well as to make a diſtinction betwixt a *landſcape* and a *proſpect;* ſuppoſing the former to be the proper ſubject for a painter, while the latter is that in which every body delights; and, in ſpite of the faſtidiouſneſs of connoiſſeurſhip, we muſt allow ſomething to the general voice of mankind. I am led to this remark from obſerving the effect of picturesque ſcenery on the viſiters of Matlock Bath (where this part of my Letter has been written.) In the valley a thouſand delightful ſubjects preſent themſelves to the painter, yet the viſiters of this place are ſeldom ſatisfied till they

they have climbed the neighbouring hills, to take a bird's-eye view of the whole ſpot, which no painting can repreſent:—the love of proſpect ſeems a natural propenſity, an inherent paſſion of the human mind, if I may uſe ſo ſtrong an expreſſion.

This conſideration confirms my opinion that *painting* and *gardening* are nearly connected, but not ſo intimately related as you imagine; they are not ſiſter arts proceeding from the ſame ſtock, but rather congenial natures, brought together like man and wife; while therefore you exult in the office of mediator betwixt theſe two "imaginary perſonages," you ſhould recollect the danger of interfering in their occaſional differences, and eſpecially how you adviſe them both to wear the ſame article of dreſs.

I ſhall conclude this long Letter by an

alluſion to a work, which it is impoſſible for you to admire more than I do. Mr. Burke, in his Eſſay on the Sublime and Beautiful, obſerves, that habit will make a man prefer the taſte of tobacco to that of ſugar; yet the world will never be brought to ſay that ſugar is not ſweet. In like manner both Mr. Knight and you are in the habits of admiring fine pictures, and both live amidſt bold and pictureſque ſcenery: this may have rendered you inſenſible to the beauty of thoſe milder ſcenes that have charms for common obſervers. I will not arraign your taſte, or call it vitiated, but your palate certainly requires a degree of "irritation" rarely to be expected in garden ſcenery; and, I truſt, the good ſenſe and good taſte of this country will never be led to deſpiſe the comfort of a gravel walk, the delicious fragrance of a ſhrubbery, the ſoul expand-

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ing delight of a wide extended proſpect,* or a view down a ſteep hill, becauſe they are all ſubjects incapable of being painted.

Notwithſtanding the occaſional aſperity of your remarks on my opinions, and the unprovoked ſally of Mr. Knight's wit, I eſteem it a very pleaſant circumſtance of my life to have been perſonally known to you both, and to have witneſſed your good taſte in many ſituations. I ſhall beg leave, therefore, to ſubſcribe myſelf, with much regard and eſteem,

SIR,

Your moſt obedient

Humble ſervant,

H. REPTON.

Hare-ſtreet, near Romford,
July 1, 1794.

* An extenſive *proſpect* is here mentioned as one of the ſubjects that may be delightful, although not pictureſque.—But I have repeatedly given my opinion, that however deſirable a proſpect may be from a tower or belvidere, it is ſeldom adviſeable from the windows of a conſtant reſidence.

P. S. One of the etchings in Mr. Knight's poem has been repreſented as copied from a work of mine; an idea which I believe Mr. Knight never intended to ſuggeſt: the ſame thing may poſſibly happen with reſpect to the place mentioned by you at page 200, and the other "two places on "a very large ſcale (page 215,) as laid out "by a profeſſed improver of high reputa-"tion." Now this being the title under which I frequently feel myſelf alluded to from our occaſional converſations, I truſt to your candour to explain, in a future edition, that theſe places are not works of mine.

A

LETTER

TO

H. REPTON, Esq.

ON THE APPLICATION OF

THE PRACTICE AS WELL AS THE PRINCIPLES

OF

Landscape-Painting to *Landscape-Gardening:*

INTENDED AS

A SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

"ESSAY ON THE PICTURESQUE."

BY

UVEDALE PRICE, Esq.

A

LETTER, &c.

SIR,

THOUGH upon ſome accounts I might have wiſhed that the printed Letter you have addreſſed to me, had been a private one; yet upon the whole I cannot be ſorry that you have made it public. I am thereby enabled freely and openly to diſcuſs the points of difference between us; to enforce ſome principles, and enlarge upon others, on which I had touched but ſlightly. On the other hand, had it been a private Letter, thoſe points might have been more amicably diſcuſſed; explanations

tions and corrections might have taken place, which, had you afterwards thought it right to appeal to the public, might have ſo changed the nature of the appeal, as to make an anſwer from me leſs neceſſary, or at leaſt leſs controverſial.

Had ſuch a Letter been addreſſed to me by a mere theoriſt in improvement, I ſhould have been much leſs ſolicitous (however high his reputation) to anſwer his objections in detail; for were I ever ſo completely to vanquiſh ſuch an antagoniſt, it might ſtill be ſaid, that the *practical* improver only, and one whoſe practice was extenſive, could point out the moſt eſſential defects in my book as far as it related to improvements: for that whatever principles could not be applied practically, and yet were intended to be ſo applied, were worſe than uſeleſs; they were likely to miſlead. It is therefore no little ſatisfac-

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tion to me, that I am now probably acquainted with the chief bent of the arguments againſt my principles of improvements, and in favour of Mr. Brown's practice; for no perſon is likely to be ſo well prepared with thoſe arguments as yourſelf.

I do not conſider this Letter merely as an anſwer to your's, but as a Supplement (and perhaps a very neceſſary one) to my Eſſay; and I will own, that without the aſſiſtance your Letter has afforded me, without the hints you there have given me, and the modes of defence and attack which you have ſuggeſted, I could not ſo well have made it.

You have, however, in the courſe of that Letter produced ſeveral opinions as mine, none of which, as far as I can judge, are warranted by what I have written; ſome directly contrary to the whole tenor

of

of my work. Theſe I muſt neceſſarily point out; and there cannot be a greater advantage in any controverſy, than to be able to ſhew clearly that your opponent has miſ-ſtated your opinions, and then ridiculed and argued againſt his own miſ-ſtatements. Had you thought proper to communicate your Letter to me before it was printed (though I do not mean to inſinuate that I had any right to expect it) you would eaſily have been convinced of thoſe miſ-ſtatements by references to my book: this would have ſaved me from the unpleaſant taſk of pointing them out to the public; a taſk which it is difficult to perform without ſome retort, and appearance of aſperity: it would alſo have ſaved you from, what I am ſure you will very ſenſibly feel, the mortification of being convicted either of want of candour, or of common attention, where, for your own

ſake,

ſake, the cloſeſt attention, and the utmoſt fairneſs and accuracy were required. It is true, I ſhould thereby have loſt a very great advantage in caſe of a controverſy; but I ſhould by no means regret it, being much more deſirous of union than of triumph.

From the time I had firſt the pleaſure of being acquainted with you, I wiſhed to be your ally, not your opponent: I flattered myſelf, that, having conſidered the ſame ſubject in different lights, and by means of a different courſe of ſtudy, we might have been of reciprocal uſe to each other. I felt great hopes that you might employ your talents (which I thought would naturally lead you that way) in making experiments in landſcape-gardening on the principles of landſcape-painting, and of the art of painting in general. Your reputation would have juſtified you in making

making thoſe experiments, and they in return (if performed for ſome time under your own eye,) would, I am convinced, have encreaſed that reputation in no ſlight degree. You have however choſen to take, what I may well call the oppoſite ſide—to ſtand forth the defender of Mr. Brown; a circumſtance which, I aſſure you, is ſincerely lamented by many of your friends and well-wiſhers, among whom I may, with great truth, reckon myſelf: they were deſirous that you ſhould ſtand on your own merits, leaving yourſelf free to avoid whatever, on more mature reflection, might appear defective in any ſyſtem.

I ſhall now proceed to anſwer the different parts of your Letter; and muſt begin by thanking you for your civility in ſpeaking ſo favourably of my book. I am much pleaſed to find that you agree with me in the general principles of the art; that is a great

great point gained: the propriety or poſſibility of reducing them to practice may be an object of future, and, I truſt, of amicable diſcuſſion. The trial as yet has never fairly been made; if it ſhould be, I am perſuaded it will be found, that the affinity between the principles of painting and of improving is much cloſer than you ſeem willing to allow; and that the application of thoſe principles, particularly with reſpect to water, will produce varieties and effects, which will ſhame the cold monotony of Mr. Brown's works.

The "new ſyſtem of improvement" you have taken the trouble of forming for me, together with the ſarcaſtic title you have given it, accord but ill with the approbation you had juſt before beſtowed, and that in ſo flattering a manner, on my general principles. As little does the conſequence of that ſyſtem accord with my ideas of improve-

improvement; for there is ſo great a pleaſure ariſing from fine verdure, from neatneſs, from the marks of habitation, of eaſe, and opulence, that rather than ſee this beautiful kingdom one huge, though picturesque, foreſt, I ſhould almoſt heſitate (had I the choice) whether I might not even prefer its being *finiſhed* by Mr. Brown; and that, for a lover of pictures, and whoſe palate, as you afterwards obſerve, requires a degree of irritation, is going a great length.*

It ſeems to me that your principal aim through the whole of this Letter, is to

* An anecdote I heard ſome years ago of Mr. Quin, and which I believe is not ſo much hackneyed as many others, ſeems to me not inapplicable. When grown old, and quite broken down, he one day crawled out to ſun himſelf on the South Parade. A conceited young fellow ſkipping up to him, cried out, "Mr. Quin! I am ſorry to ſee you look ſo old and infirm; now what would you give to be as young, and as active, and as full of ſpirits as I am!" Quin looked at him very ſternly; "Young man," ſaid he, "I would bid very high indeed—I think I could be content to be as fooliſh."

ſhew,

ſhew, that by an attention to pictures, and to the method of ſtudy purſued by painters, only wild and unpoliſhed ideas are acquired. I cannot but wonder, that a perſon whoſe talents for drawing might have led him to form a more juſt opinion on the ſubject, ſhould have conceived that the ſtudy of an art, which has been employed in tracing whatever is moſt beautiful and elegant, as well as what is wild and romantic, ſhould convert its admirers into ſo many Cherokees, and make them loſe all reliſh but for what is ſavage and uncultivated. I will beg you to reflect on what ſome of the higheſt artiſts have done both in their pictures and drawings, and on the character of their productions; you muſt be ſenſible that the mixture of gay and highly cultivated nature, with the moſt ſplendid and finiſhed works of art in Claude Lorrain—the ſtudied and uniform grandeur of the landſcapes of N. Pouſſin,

the ſtyle of his compoſitions, ſometimes approaching to formality, but from that very circumſtance deriving a ſolemn dignity,—are both of them (and many other examples might be given) as diſtinct from the wildneſs of mere foreſt ſcenery, as they are from the tameneſs of Mr. Brown's performances. Many painters, it is true, did principally ſtudy the wild and unpoliſhed parts of nature; and from this circumſtance, and from my having mentioned in my Eſſay the effects of neglect and accident, together with the uſe which all painters *had* made, and improvers *might* make of thoſe effects, you have formed a *ſyſtem* for me; and have called it "*the new* "*ſyſtem of improving by neglect and acci-* "*dent.*" You will, perhaps, be ſurpriſed if I ſhould ſhew, in the courſe of this Letter, that you have been trying to ridicule (and very undeſervedly) your own practice, while you thought you were laughing at mine.

mine. Had you conſidered what I have written, with the attention which every man ought to give to what he means to criticiſe, and candidly taken the ſpirit of it, you muſt have felt that I never could propoſe ſo prepoſterous a plan as you appear to have formed for me; that I never could mean that the improver ſhould abandon all deſign, and leave every thing to chance (the idea you clearly intend to convey by "the new ſyſtem of improving "by neglect and accident,") but that by ſtudying the effects which *had* been produced by them, he ſhould learn *how* to deſign; that is, how to produce ſimilar effects, with as great a degree of certainty as the caſe will admit of, for ſtill a great deal muſt, and ought to be, left to accident.*

This

* I was ſtruck with a paſſage I read lately in Helvetius, which illuſtrates this idea, by ſhewing its application to a higher purpoſe. "Le hazard a, et il aura donc toujours part a notre education, et ſurtout a celle des hommes de genie. En

This may appear like a contradiction; but it muſt be remembered, that what would be abſurd in many other arts (as for inſtance, in architecture) is proper in your's, where vegetation is the chief inſtrument in your operations. Trees and plants of every kind (conſidered as materials for landſcape) ſhould have room to ſpread in various degrees, and in various directions, and then accident will produce unthought-of varieties and beauties, without injuring the general deſign: but if they are allowed to ſpread in one direction only, you in a great meaſure prevent the operation of accident; and thence the ſameneſs and heavineſs of the outſides of clumps, and of all cloſe plantations. The

En veut on augmenter le nombre dans une nation? *Qu'on obſerve les moyens dont ſe ſert le hazard* pour inſpirer aux hommes le deſir de s'illuſtrer. Cette obſervation faite, qu'on les place *a deſſein*, et frequemment *dans les memes poſitions ou le hazard les place rarement.* C'eſt le ſeul moyen de les multiplier." Helvetius de l'Homme, chap. 8.

old

old gardeners of the Dutch ſchool *totally* prevented its operation, and imitated architecture; and thence the ſtill greater formality and ſtiffneſs of vegetable walls, and of all that is called topiary work. It has been ſaid in defence of Mr. Brown, that allowing the clump to be bad, yet ſtill it is better than an obeliſk or pyramid of lime, or yew: this defence would be good, had ſuch pyramids and obeliſks, and all the ornaments of a Dutch garden, been ſtuck upon the ſides and ſummits of hills, and all the moſt conſpicuous points of a whole diſtrict; the clump would then have taken the place of more glaring pieces of formality, and therefore would comparatively have been an improvement: but as the caſe ſtands, while Mr. Brown was removing old pieces of formality, he was eſtabliſhing new ones of a more extenſive and miſchievous conſequence. Beſides, thoſe old formalities were acknowledged

as ſuch, and confined to the garden only; but theſe new ones have no limits, and are not only cried up as ſpecimens of pure, genuine nature, but of nature refined and embelliſhed; from which the painter, as well as the gardener, may learn to correct and enlarge his ideas and his practice.

As I have attributed much of the defect in Mr. Brown's ſyſtem to his not having attended to the effects which *had* been produced by accident, and to his having, in a great degree, prevented its *future* operation in his own works—as this is in my opinion a point of no little conſequence, though (as you have ſhewn) extremely open to miſrepreſentation; and as it is a point on which I have touched but ſlightly in my Eſſay, I will beg leave to dwell upon it a little longer.

Every man will allow that painters and improvers ought to ſtudy nature, and nature in contradiſtinction to art. Are then

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all parts of nature to be ſtudied indiſcriminately? No one will make ſuch an aſſertion. But whence do theſe various combinations ariſe, of trees ſo happily grouped and connected with ground, buildings, and water; of open lawns, of cloſer glades, and ſkirtings, in planting and forming which no art has been employed? As it cannot be from deſign, it muſt be from accident. Of theſe lucky accidents painters have made the greateſt uſe; wherever they meet with them they eagerly trace them in their ſketch-book; theſe they ſtudy, arrange, and combine in a thouſand different ways; theſe are the ſtores whence their greater compoſitions are afterwards formed. But of theſe accidents (if we may judge from their works) improvers have as yet made but little uſe.

Again, wherever art interferes, the effect of theſe beautiful and ſtriking acci-

dents is generally ſpoiled to the painter's eye; for the prevailing taſte for clearing either indiſcriminately, or in diſtinct clumps and patches, deſtroys their connection, their playful variety, and intricacy. Neglect, therefore, as well as accident, is neceſſary to furniſh theſe examples of nature in her moſt picturesque ſtate; that is (according to the common uſe of the word) the ſtate in which painters do, and improvers ought to ſtudy and imitate her; but, in the latter caſe particularly, with ſuch modifications as the character of the ſcenery may require. Accident and neglect are therefore two principal cauſes of thoſe beauties (and they often deſerve that name in its ſtricteſt ſenſe) which painters, lovers of painting, and many whoſe natural judgment has not been vitiated by falſe ideas of refinement, admire: and whoever means to ſtudy nature, muſt principally attend to the effects

of

of neglect and accident. But, as Mr. Burke well obſerves, " there is in mankind an un-
" fortunate propenſity to make themſelves,
" their views, and their works, the meaſure
" of excellence in every thing whatſoever."

Leſt you ſhould think my arguments for ſuch a courſe of ſtudy not ſufficiently convincing, I can produce an authority for it, which you cannot well diſpute; I mean your own practice. I learned from your own mouth, and with much ſatisfaction, that you had gone repeatedly into Epping Foreſt for the purpoſe of ſtudying. Of ſtudying what? not the effects of art or deſign—not of nature indiſcriminately; but peculiar effects, peculiar diſpoſitions of trees, thickets, glades, lawns, openings, and ſkirtings of various form and character, which you might afterwards transfer with a higher degree of poliſh, but without injuring their looſe and

varied

varied ſhapes, to more ornamented ſcenes. You were therefore ſtudying the effect of neglect and accident, and it is a ſtudy, which, joined to that of the ſelections which painters have made of thoſe effects, every profeſſor of your art ſhould perpetually renew; not merely in foreſts, but univerſally wherever they occur. He ſhould, by the ſtudy of pictures, accuſtom his eye to catch them, and to fix them in his memory as ſources of natural, unaffected variety; or he will certainly fall into the wretched ſameneſs of him, whom you have dignified with the title of "that "great ſelf-taught maſter," and whoſe works (if he was ſelf-taught) fully juſtify the Italian proverb.*

I cannot quit the ſhort note of your's, which has occaſioned ſo large a comment,

* Chi s'inſegna ha ún pazzo per maeſtro. Vide Eſſay on the Picturesque, page 4.

without

without obſerving, that it ſeems to be meant as a ſort of corrective both of the praiſes you have given and received. With regard to myſelf, I can freely ſay that I ſpoke of your talents as I thought of them, and I praiſed them, becauſe it is always pleaſant to give praiſe where it is due.

I did take the liberty of recommending to you the ſtudy of what the higher artiſts have done, both in their pictures and their drawings; for I will frankly own, that from all the converſations which have paſſed between us, I had (perhaps raſhly) conceived, that you were not very converſant in them: I cannot recollect, amidſt all the romantic ſcenes we viewed together, your having made any of thoſe alluſions to the works of various maſters, which might naturally have occurred to a perſon who had ſtudied, or even obſerved them with common attention. I did therefore

fore take the liberty of recommending what I thought would be of the greateſt uſe in your profeſſion, but am extremely glad to hear that you had anticipated my advice; that you had ſtudied the great maſters, and that you allow (a conceſſion of no ſlight importance) that it is a branch of knowledge eſſential to the profeſſion.

That there is a certain affinity between all the polite arts, has been univerſally acknowledged, from Ariſtotle and Cicero down to the preſent time; and it ſeems to me that good taſte, and good judgment, conſiſt in finding out in what circumſtances, and in what degree, that affinity holds good, and may be practically applied. General aſſertions are eaſily made, and as they carry no conviction, they require no anſwer; whether thoſe who are *not* profeſſors, are likely to ſuppoſe greater affinity between

between the arts than thoſe who are, I really cannot tell; but I am pretty certain that this oblique compliment to the latter, at the expence of us Dilettanti, will not bring over the profeſſors of painting to admire clumps, belts, &c. and that they will at leaſt be of opinion, that there is greater affinity between landſcape painting, and landſcape gardening, than appears in Mr. Brown's works.

I ſhall always remember with pleaſure the hours we ſpent together on the Wye, and the perfect good-humour and cheerfulneſs of the whole party; but I could not help obſerving at the time, (and with much concern,) how lightly you treated the idea of taking any hints from any part of a natural river, towards forming an artificial one. You tell me, however, that an enthuſiaſm for the pictureſque, had originally led you to fancy greater affinity between

between painting and gardening, than you found to exiſt after mature deliberation, and practical experience. As I cannot gueſs how far that enthuſiaſm may originally have carried you, ſo neither can I gueſs in what degree mature deliberation, and practical experience, may have altered your ideas: your profeſſion, it is true (as it has hitherto been exerciſed) may be conſidered as a certain preventive againſt any ſuch enthuſiaſm, and as a moſt radical cure for it, ſhould the infection have taken place; but I ſtill muſt hope that your's, though lowered, has by no means been extinguiſhed by it.

Though your principal aim throughout the whole of your Letter has been to counteract my endeavours, and to weaken as much as poſſible the connection between painting and landſcape gardening, yet your own mode of proceeding affords the

ſtrongeſt

ſtrongeſt proof of the cloſeneſs of that connection. Conſider only what your proceſs is, when you are conſulted about the improvements of a place. One of the firſt things you do is to make repreſentations of the principal points, in the ſtate in which you find them; and other repreſentations of the ſtate in which you hope they will be hereafter. In reality, you make the beſt *pictures* you can, with the materials you find there; and alſo with thoſe freſh ones you mean to employ, and to which time muſt give effect. Conſider the whole progreſs and aim of your operation, and compare it with that of the painter.

According to my notions, were a landſcape painter employed to correct the defects of a ſcene that the owner wiſhed to improve (an employment which, without degrading his profeſſion, would ennoble

your's)

your's) he would begin by examining the forms and tints of all the objects, and their connection, by the principles of his art; if he found the trees too crouded, and too heavy, he would vary and lighten their maſſes in his drawing; if too ſcattered, connect them; where parts were bare, he would place ſuch maſſes or groups as he thought would beſt ſuit the compoſition. If the houſe were of a harſh colour, he would make it of a more harmonizing tint; if the form of it were flat and without any relief, or too much in one lump, or (in the oppoſite extreme) with its parts too much disjoined, he would give to the whole more lightneſs, more maſſiveneſs, more variety, or unity, as the caſe might require: If there were a river, or a piece of water, he would make ſuch alterations in the ſhape and the accompaniments, as might have the happieſt effect from the

principal

principal ſtations. This I conceive would nearly be the painter's aim and method of proceeding: in what points then do that aim, and that method, differ from your's? If in none, what cloſer affinity can there be between any two arts than between painting and landſcape gardening? ſo cloſe indeed is their affinity in thoſe moſt material points, diſpoſition and general effect, that they ought to be, and I hope will be, perfectly incorporated.

In all this, *convenience* and *propriety* are not the objects of conſideration: not that either of them is to be neglected, but that they are objects of another kind; objects of good ſenſe, and good judgment, rather than of that more refined and delicate ſenſe and judgment, called taſte. Any glaring offence againſt either of them is diſguſting, but the ſtricteſt obſervance of them will give a man but little reputation

for taſte, unleſs the general effect of the *picture* be good. In theſe pictures, you, as an improver, diſplay your ſkill in uniting what is preſent, and what is future, into compoſitions, and in arranging the forms and tints as they will beſt accord: they give the firſt impreſſion of your talents, and they are in a great degree to be your guides in the execution. It is true, you are not a Claude, a Gaſpar, a Pouſſin, or a Titian, but you do as much as your powers will enable you to do, which I by no means intend to undervalue, when I place them at an immenſe diſtance from ſuch maſters; as likewiſe from others I could name, who, by a ſucceſsful ſtudy of their works, have transfuſed the ſpirit of them into their own. I am perſuaded you have not the vanity to compare your forms and diſpoſitions of objects (and I ſpeak not of effects) to theirs; and that you muſt be

ſenſible,

ſenſible, that were the minds of artiſts ſuch as thoſe I have mentioned, turned to the practical part, the ſame feeling and experience which guided them to the happieſt choices in their pictures, would equally guide them in nature. How, indeed, ſhould it be otherwiſe? Such men would quickly ſee how groups might beſt be improved by cutting down, by pruning, or by planting; they would diſcover the whole connection of the different landſcapes, and make the beſt uſe of the materials they found in real nature, juſt as they would in transferring them on the canvas. The more you ſtudy their works, and the lucky accidents of nature, the more you will bring your pictures and your places to reſemble the variety and connection of their forms, and the union of their tints; and practice will always ſuggeſt ſuch ſoftenings as ſituation may

 require,

require, and ſuch ſacrifices as convenience and propriety may demand.

I muſt here obſerve, that through the whole of your Letter you have very ſtudiouſly and dextrouſly endeavoured to confine your reader's ideas to mere garden ſcenes, and what is near the houſe, though you certainly would not wiſh your own practice to be ſo limited: you have alſo endeavoured to perſuade them, that I think every thing ſhould be ſacrificed to pictureſque effect. I had foreſeen the probability of ſuch miſrepreſentation, but thought it the leſs neceſſary for me to guard againſt it, becauſe the obſervations I have made in my Eſſay relate almoſt entirely to the *grounds*, and not to what may properly be called the garden.* Still, however, I will beg leave to refer you and your readers to page 37, in which it is mentioned, that

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 366.

near

near the houſe picturesque beauty muſt in many caſes be ſacrificed to neatneſs, &c.; alſo to page 325, in which the characteriſtic beauty of lawns is mentioned; alſo to page 192, where the delights of ſpring, its flowers and bloſſoms, are deſcribed; all which, with many other paſſages, I think will ſhew that I am by no means bigotted to the picturesque, or inſenſible to the charms of beauty, though I have tried to diſcriminate the two characters. I muſt, indeed, take the liberty of referring you to the whole book; for it ſtrikes me, as I will fairly own, that if you did read it through, it muſt have been in a very curſory manner, with a view of obſerving what was hoſtile to ſuch parts of modern gardening as you adhered to, and what were the parts of my oppoſite principles moſt open to attack: but as to the general chain of reaſoning, (ſuch as it is) and the

connection and dependance of one principle on another, I am very clear that you either did not attend to them, or had totally diſcarded them from your memory before you wrote your Letter.

You have obſerved, that a beautiful garden ſcene is not more defective becauſe it would not look well upon canvas, than a didactic poem, becauſe it did not furniſh a ſubject to the painter, &c. You will forgive me if I do not think this a very happy illuſtration. The principal object of a *didactic* poem is to inſtruct, to be uſeful; the ornaments are ſubordinate. It therefore bears a much nearer reſemblance to what is called a *ferme ornee* than to a garden; and nothing, in my opinion, would more happily illuſtrate the various degrees and ſtyles of ornament which might accord with what is uſeful, than the various characters of ſuch poems. A didactic work

work in *proſe*, is a *mere* farm; it pretends only to be uſeful: though in ſuch works, as in mere farms, intereſting and amuſing parts will often preſent themſelves even to thoſe who are not intereſted in the general ſubject; and the more agreeably ſo, as they are not intended. Many didactic poems are *ſermoni propiora:* they differ from mere proſe only by a certain arrangement, and a few poetical ornaments; either the ground-work of the poem itſelf, or the genius of the poet not leading him to higher effuſions. Theſe anſwer very much to an ornamented farm in a country where the ſoil is good and well cultivated, but where there are no great natural beauties. On the other hand, there are didactic poems, where the moſt ſtriking imagery is mixed with the inſtructive parts, and ſo happily, that the ornaments ſeem to ariſe out of the ſubject, and ſink as naturally

into it again; but rarely appear (as they almoſt always do in improved places) like patches of ornament, that catch the vulgar, and offend the judicious eye. Of this deſcription are the two moſt renowned of all didactic poems, thoſe of Lucretius and Virgil; and they are the beſt illuſtrations of the manner in which the uſeful and the ornamental, in places of great natural beauties, ſhould be combined together.

Thoſe who wiſh for as great a degree of elegance and high poliſh as is compatible with grandeur and energy, will imitate Virgil; but, like him, they will avoid all flat effeminate ſmoothneſs. Like him, they will leave thoſe maſterly touches which give a ſpirit to the reſt, though they will give to the whole of their ſcenery a more general appearance of poliſh, than thoſe who take Lucretius for their model. In him certainly the contraſt between what

what anſwers to the pictureſque, the ſublime, and the beautiful, that is, between the rough, and ſeemingly neglected parts —the forcible and majeſtic images he at other times preſents—and the extreme ſoftneſs and voluptuouſneſs of his beautiful paſſages—is much more ſtriking than in Virgil; and therefore by many his ſtyle has been preferred to that of his more equal, but leſs original rival. Both, however, are far removed from coarſe and ſlovenly negligence, and from inſipid ſmoothneſs. But though neither theſe, nor any other didactic poems have the leaſt analogy to a garden ſcene, yet there is enough of modern poetry that will perfectly ſuit many modern pleaſure-grounds. Who is there that has not read, or tried to read, under the name of poems, a number of ſmooth, flowing verſes, equally void of imagery and inſtruction?

As

As your Letter is addreſſed to me in conſequence of my book, I could wiſh to know from what part of it you have collected, that, in my opinion, the painter's landſcape is indiſpenſible to the perfection of gardening? I muſt own, at the ſame time, that I do not perfectly underſtand what idea you annex to that term, though I conclude you mean by it in general a landſcape with rough and broken parts: ſtill, however, there is ſomething extremely vague in the term of the *painter's landſcape*, as alſo in that of *gardening*. In its enlarged ſenſe and practice, gardening may extend over miles of country; and painters' landſcapes differ from each other as much as the ſcenes they repreſent: a Salvator Roſa, or a Mola, for inſtance, differ as much from a Claude, as a garden, from a piece of rough paſture. Wovermans, and many of the Dutch maſters,

often

often introduced parts of gardens into their landſcapes; Rubens ſometimes, and Watteau very frequently, painted garden ſcenes only; in Claude, orange-trees and flower-pots are mixed with his buildings: hardly any thing in nature is ſo poliſhed, ſo formal, ſo flat, nay ſo ugly, as not to have been ſometimes made into a landſcape, and by ſome painter of reputation. To aſk, therefore, whether the painter's landſcape is indiſpenſible to gardening, is to aſk whether all that is rugged and ſavage, all that is highly cultivated and embelliſhed, all that is ſolemn and majeſtic, all that is light and fantaſtic—in ſhort, whether all the different characters of art and nature are indiſpenſible to the perfection of gardening. Now, if inſtead of *the painter's landſcape*, you had put *a ſtudy of the principles of painting*, as in candour you ought to have done, the whole would

would have been perfectly intelligible, the whole fairly ſtated according to the author's words and obvious meaning: and you yourſelf allow *that* ſtudy to be eſſential to your profeſſion.

I muſt here obſerve, that as with regard to improvements, you have wiſhed to confine your reader's ideas to mere garden ſcenes, ſo with reſpect to painting, you have directed them towards the rudeſt ſtyles of landſcapes; in order to ſeparate the two arts as widely as poſſible, and weaken their affinity. You muſt be ſenſible, however, that all landſcapes are not rough; that for inſtance, Adrian Vandervelde, and Wovermans, are often too ſmooth; and I forbear mentioning hiſtory, or portrait painters, ſuch as Carlo Dolce, &c. being leſs ſtrictly to the preſent object. As landſcapes may be conſidered (independently of figures and buildings)

as

as copies of the *general* effects of vegetation, and of the ſoil it ſprings from; ſo may flower-painting, as an imitation of the *near*, and *diſtinct* effects of the moſt beautiful parts of it; and you will own, that nature herſelf is hardly more ſoft and delicate in her moſt delicate productions, than the copies of them by Van Huyſſum. To the greateſt delicacy and exactneſs he alſo joined the choice of forms, the effects of light and ſhadow, and harmony of tints; in ſhort, he knew the principles of his art. Take then the moſt dreſſed and poliſhed of all garden ſcenes, and what may be ſuppoſed leaſt to intereſt a painter—a mere flower-garden, ſurrounded with ſhrubs and exotic trees. If we ſuppoſe that two ſuch flower-gardens were ſhewn to ſuch a painter—that in the one, the grouping of the ſhrubs, the flowers, and their ornamental accompaniments — their general effect,

effect, harmony, and connection—the variety of their forms, and their light and ſhadow, were ſuch as his judgment approved; while in the other, every thing was comparatively ſcattered, diſcordant and in patches, and had neither the ſame variety nor connection—would he not be a better judge of the *degree* of ſuperiority of the one over the other, and of the *cauſes* of that ſuperiority, than a perſon who had not ſtudied his art? would not his criticiſms, and his directions, be more likely to improve ſuch ſcenes, than thoſe of a gardener? and were he to paint them, is it not probable that the one he preferred would be the more beautiful, both in reality, and on the canvas? The queſtion, therefore, is not, whether the Caracci, Franceſco Bologneſe, or S. Roſa, would ſtudy landſcapes in a flower-garden, but which of two ſcenes of the ſame character,

ter, (whatever it were, from the Alps to a parterre,) had moſt of thoſe qualities that accord with the general principles of their art. Conſidered in this light, I am perſuaded that if inſtead of Van Huyſſum, S. Roſa himſelf had been ſhewn two ſuch flower-gardens, the ſame general principles would have made his and the Dutch painter's judgment agree. If this would be the caſe in a mere flower-garden, the more the ſcene was extended and diverſified, the more it would get out of the province of the gardener, and into that of the painter.

But you are ſo alarmed, leſt any of your friends and employers ſhould be infected with an enthuſiaſm for the pictureſque (which you ſeem to conſider as nearly ſynonymous with the art of painting), that you have not only endeavoured to ſeduce them by the allurements of beauty as a ſeparate quality, but have alſo addreſſed yourſelf to

their

their fears. You have alarmed your valetudinarian and hypochondriacal patients for their ſpirits and conſtitution, by telling them, that the conſequence of having that myſterious bug-bear, the painter's landſcape, in their places, "is a ſacrifice of the health, cheerfulneſs, and comfort of a country reſidence." Do you really think that rocks and caſcades (when a gentleman is ſo unfortunate as to have them within the circuit of his walks, or even near his manſion) are more aguiſh than graſs and ſtagnant water? or is a made river, with its formal ſweeps and naked edges, more cheerful and enlivening than a rapid ſtream—

Che rompe il corſo fra minuti faſſi?

Is a ſandy or gravelly lane, with broken ground and wild vegetation, leſs healthy or varied than a gravel walk between banks ſmoothly turfed?

I be-

I believe there are many people who imagine that dirt, rubbiſh, and filth, are eſſential to the pictureſque; and that a true connoiſſeur can judge of objects of that character by their ſmell, as an antiquarian is ſuppoſed to know by the taſte, whether a medal has the true ancient ærugo. It muſt be allowed, that filthy objects are often pictureſque, but not becauſe they are filthy; on the contrary, ſuch ideas always muſt take off from pleaſure of any kind. All dirt, mud, and filth, as ſuch, are ſimply ugly;* ſo is mere rubbiſh: thiſtles and docks may have a rich effect in the fore-ground of a wild ſcene, but ground covered with docks, thiſtles, or nettles, is merely ugly; ſo is ground that has been diſturbed and thrown about, though time and vegetation may add pictureſque circumſtances to uglineſs

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 211.

and deformity;* and though painters are fond of what is called broken ground, yet, when improperly introduced, it offends the painter's, no leſs than the gardener's eye. All land that is boggy, ruſhy, or which in any way has the appearance of being wet, is equally adverſe to the pictureſque and the beautiful; and that in foreſts many ſuch parts are found, is no argument that they are pictureſque; but, perhaps, beſides your anxiety to preſerve your friends from that dangerous enthuſiaſm which you yourſelf were once ſeized with, the deſire of introducing that ingenious expedient of the picture at the end of the avenue, may have been no ſlight additional motive for attacking the painter's landſcape.

You have obſerved (what I have often heard remarked,) that there are a thouſand

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 214.

ſcenes

ſcenes in nature to delight the eye, beſides thoſe that may be copied as pictures. This appears to me a very common, but very fallacious argument againſt the affinity between painting and improving: all ſuch ſcenes; with hardly any exception, *may* be copied as pictures, and thoſe which make the beſt pictures will probably be the moſt beautiful and pleaſing ſcenes; but then the compariſon muſt not be made between a lawn or a pleaſure-ground, and a piece of foreſt ſcenery; but between two lawns, or two pleaſure-grounds: for the effect of all high poliſh on the character of ſcenery, as on that of the human mind, is to diminiſh variety and energy; and it is hardly neceſſary to ſay, of what conſequence thoſe two qualities are in painting. You yourſelf are often employed in copying, not only ſuch poliſhed ſcenes as are generally pleaſing, though leſs ſuited to the canvas,

but alſo ſuch as have little to delight either the common, or the pictureſque eye: by copying them, their beauties (if they have any) and their defects are made more apparent, as well as the additions and corrections which may be made. In making thoſe additions and corrections, what is your principal aim? Certainly, I believe, to make the beſt compoſitions, the beſt *pictures* you can: *convenience* and *propriety* are to be the checks, the correctives; they are to prevent you from ſacrificing too much to what might pleaſe the painter only; but ſubject to that check, your aim (as I ſaid before) is to make pictures, and to make them in their general principle, as nearly approaching as poſſible to painter's landſcapes; for I think you will acknowledge, that thoſe ſcenes (of whatever kind) which have moſt of a whole—of union, connection, and harmony; that

is,

is, have moſt of the requiſites of a picture, are moſt to be admired. You will alſo acknowledge, that where any of thoſe requiſites are wanting, you wiſh them to be there.

Mr. Gilpin's regret (if I underſtand him right) is, that there are ſo few perfect compoſitions in nature; ſo few where, either in the fore-ground—the diſpoſition of the trees—the forms of the hills—the manner in which the diſtance comes in between the nearer objects, &c. a great painter would not ſee defects; or at leaſt ſomething that might clearly be changed to advantage. But what does this regret prove? Surely, that we ſhould highly value ſuch compoſitions where they exiſt, or where they moſt nearly approach to perfection, and that we ſhould endeavour to form them as far as our powers, and the ſtyle of the ſcenery will allow; in

ſhort, that we ſhould not attend merely to a confined notion of beauty as a ſeparate quality, but to a more enlarged and general idea of it.

Before I publiſhed my Eſſay, I was told by a friend who had read it in MS. that the admirers of Mr. Brown's ſyſtem would certainly take advantage of my diſtinction, profeſs themſelves ſatisfied with beauty alone, and ready to give up the picturesque: notwithſtanding my friend's prophecy, I can ſcarcely hope that they will give *me* ſuch an advantage. In the firſt place, before they give up all pretenſion to one object of improvement, it would be prudent to eſtabliſh their title to the other; and I hope, in the courſe of this Letter, to exhibit ſome glaring proofs how great their imprudence would be in that point of view. In the next place, I ſuppoſe it will be allowed, that there are (in every

ſenſe

ſenſe of the words) highly *picturesque* ſcenes near many gentlemen's houſes in this kingdom, and that it alſo will be allowed, that to deſtroy the peculiar character of any ſcene is not the way to improve it: hence it naturally follows, that to enable either the owner himſelf, or the profeſſor, to make any real improvements in ſuch ſcenes, it is neceſſary, not only that they ſhould not deſpiſe or renounce, but that they ſhould ſtudy, and obtain a thorough knowledge of the character to which it belongs. Should therefore the Browniſts in general renounce the picturesque, they certainly ought to do what I hardly expect—renounce improving all ſuch ſcenes: and with regard to the profeſſors, ſhould they only renounce the character, and all ſtudy of it, they will at leaſt give fair warning; and thoſe who, after ſuch a declaration, ſhould employ them, would have no right to complain of the

miſchief they might do.* Still, however, Mr. Brown, and thoſe whom you have very juſtly, though ſeverely, called "the taſte-"leſs herd of his followers," have been univerſally and profeſſedly, ſmoothers, ſhavers, clearers, levellers, and dealers in diſtinct ſerpentine lines and edges; they have alſo been ſatisfied with the equivocal name of *improvers*, and from them a declaration of ſuch a nature would be leſs ſurpriſing; but that you, a *landſcape*-gardener, and the firſt, I believe, that has aſſumed that title—that you ſhould ſet out by giving up (or what nearly amounts to it) the pictureſque, and by endeavouring to weaken the affinity between painting and landſcape-gardening, is what I am equally grieved and ſurpriſed at.

Before I ſay any thing farther on the uſe of the pictureſque in landſcape-gardening, I muſt beg leave to call the reader's

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 38.

attention

attention to a few points in this controverſy. I wiſh it to be remembered, that, according to the diſtinction I have made, (and which you have paid me the compliment of calling judicious) the picturesque, by being diſcriminated from the beautiful and the ſublime, has a ſeparate character, and not a mere reference to the art of painting. The picturesque, therefore, in that ſenſe, as compoſed of rough and abrupt objects, is in many caſes not applicable to modern gardening; but the principles of painting are always ſo. This is, in my opinion, a very material difference, and one which I have tried to explain and eſtabliſh throughout my book; yet it ſeems to me, that either from deſign or inattention, you have not made the diſtinction.

In the next place (as I obſerved before) the term of *gardening* is extremely apt to miſlead. What would be proper in a park,

park, or ſheep-walk, would be equally improper very near the houſe, or in ſight of the windows. Now I have obſerved, that upon all occaſions where you renounce the pictureſque, or wiſh to make your readers renounce it, you act like troops, or veſſels, that retire under the guns of a battery; you always keep cloſe to the manſion; you talk of the *habitation and convenience of man*, of a *garden* ſcene, &c. One might therefore ſuppoſe that all the talents of a landſcape-gardener were to be diſplayed within a few hundred yards of the houſe, where (as I obſerved towards the beginning of my Eſſay*) the pictureſque muſt often be ſacrificed to neatneſs, and to things of comfort, as gravel walks with regular borders, &c.

In the third place I muſt beg it to be remembered, that I have taken no ſmall pains to ſhew, that, though a diſtinct cha-

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 37.

racter,

racter, the picturesque is generally mixed with the beautiful, and that it is for want of observing how nature has blended them that improvers have fallen into so much tameness and insipidity.* Now you have, throughout your Letter, considered the picturesque as to be applied in its roughest state; as a harsh discord without being prepared, or resolved—a dose of crude antimony without any corrective—all by way of deterring your patients from mixing such sharp, stimulating ingredients with the soft emollients of Mr. Brown. It is also curious to observe, how you have avoided mentioning whatever might lead the imagination towards picturesque scenes, lest your readers should be seduced by the bare recital of them: you therefore, after having, by a sort of proxy, made choice of *unmixed* beauty (and what that beauty is shall afterwards be considered) have re-

* Essay on the Picturesque, page 125.

marked

marked that pictureſqueneſs may be tranſferred—not to rocks, deep glens, and caverns; to caſcades, to rivers daſhing among ſtones, to wild foreſt glades, and thickets—but to the ragged gipſey; with whom [not with the rocks, caſcades, &c.] you obſerve that the wild aſs, the Pomeranian dog, the ſhaggy goat, are more in harmony than the ſleek-coated horſe, &c. The natural thing was to ſhew that theſe wild *animals* were in harmony with wild *ſcenery*; no—for fear of alluding to what might endanger the cauſe, they are made in harmony with the *gipſey*; not with thoſe *landſcapes* in which both they and the gipſey would be the moſt proper *figures*.

You have, in this place, ſomewhat ſarcaſtically alluded to an obſervation in my Eſſay, namely, "that the effect of deer in "groups is apt to be meagre and ſpot-"ty."* This obſervation (which I be-

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 63.

lieve

lieve is not a new one) I have no reaſon to think unfounded. Animals which, like deer, are of a ſlender make, whoſe ſlenderneſs is not diſguiſed by fleecy or ſhaggy coats, and whoſe coats (like thoſe of many deer) are mottled, muſt ſurely be more apt to be meagre and ſpotty when in groups, than ſuch as are of a fuller make and appearance, and of a more uniform and harmonizing tint. The effect in trees would be obvious: thin trees, thinly clothed with foliage, and that foliage of a variety of tints, you muſt allow would at leaſt be *apt* to be meagre and ſpotty in groups; and I went no further. The obſervation in my Eſſay does not ſtand alone, as might poſſibly be ſuppoſed from your alluſion; it was put there to ſhew the diſtinct qualities of deer and ſheep, conſidered as animals ſuited to pictures; it was to ſhew, what was very much to my purpoſe, and

what

what I am very glad here again to inculcate, that an object may be highly ſuited to the painter without being on that account pictureſque in my ſenſe of the word; nay, ſo far from it, that it may, and often does ſuit him from ſome quality directly oppoſite to thoſe which I have aſſigned to that character;* as for inſtance, from uniformity of ſhape and of tint. From that uniformity often proceeds what both in colour, and in light and ſhadow, is called *breadth*, which quality of breadth (as I have ſhewn in my Eſſay†.) will often render an object, in itſelf neither grand, beautiful, nor pictureſque, extremely ſuited to the painter. This principle is in ſome degree exemplified in the ſheep and the deer, which laſt, I think, muſt be allowed to be comparatively meagre and ſpotty,

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 61.
† Ibid. 165.

and

and eſpecially the dappled kind, which indeed I had not mentioned, but of which you, like a generous adverſary, have given me the advantage.

Claude, who often introduced deer into his pictures, avoided thoſe of the mottled kind, and made his of one uniform, quiet tint: he would equally have avoided the Nova Scotia breed of ſheep, and all pied animals; for no painter was more attentive to general harmony. Berchem, who aimed at great brilliancy, both in touch and colour, painted cattle with their various marks; and his pictures (though excellent in other reſpects) are remarkable for their ſpottineſs, and the want of that fullneſs of form and repoſe, for which Claude's are ſo diſtinguiſhed.

Though you have not directly, and in your own name renounced the picturesque, yet no man who did not wiſh it

to

to be renounced, would ſpeak of tranſferring it to goats and gipſies. But do you really think it has little to do (in whatever ſenſe you take it) with landſcape gardening? Suppoſe, for inſtance, that in a place you were improving, there were a river, in one part of which the banks conſiſted of ſoft and freſh meadow and paſture, either level, or gently ſloping to the water; the natural turf extending to the brink, unleſs where the current had ſlightly worn it away, or where a low fringe of wood, or flouriſhing trees overhung it, and broke the continuation of its outline. That in other parts the banks were of a rude and pictureſque character; high and abrupt, with rugg d old trees projecting from them, and extending their twiſted limbs over the ſtream; that the ground had crumbled away from among their ſhaggy roots, and had left them, and

bits

bits of rock, or rude ſtones, arching over the coves beneath them; that both theſe banks, if not within view of the windows, were within the circuit of the home walk: Would you, by way of making the two parts of the ſame character, and the whole more ſtrictly *beautiful*, deſtroy theſe rough projecting trees, the rude ſtones, the broken ground with its accompaniments, and all their varied reflections in the water? Were you to hint that ſuch a thing were poſſible, you muſt abdicate the firſt part of your title. You might ſay, however, that *being* there you would not *deſtroy* them. But could you with a wiſh make the whole ſoft and beautiful—could you make it ſo without the expence of new work, and the rawneſs of its effect, and at once give it the fringe and mellowneſs of the other part; would you do it? would you give up the variety and contraſt of the two characters, and the relief

they would give to each other? would you not rather preſerve to each its diſtinct ſtyle, and be careful how you introduced too much ſoftneſs and ſmoothneſs into the ruder ſcene? would you not conſider how to make the moſt, both of the effect of contraſt, and of connection; by ſometimes going abruptly from one ſcene to the other, and by ſometimes gradually ſoftening the pictureſque into the beautiful, and inſenſibly blending the one with the other? would you not do the ſame by any other ſcenery of the ſame kind? Were a wild entangled dingle, with rocks, and a headlong torrent, near the houſe; would you not be cautious how you deprived it in too great a degree, of its rude, and even entangled look? and would you not, while you facilitated the communication, avoid the appearance of doing ſo, and the conſtant parade of a walk; would you not think yourſelf lucky, if from a dreſſed part of the pleaſure-

ſure-ground—from out of a flower-garden—you could ſuddenly burſt into a ſcene of this kind?—Should you tell me that near the houſe, and where the walks extended, you would wiſh all this to be ſmooth and undulating, and every mark of roughneſs and abruptneſs deſtroyed—I would freely ſay, that no profeſſed improver ought ever to be admitted, except where a profeſſed improver had been before; and where the Coſſacks had been rifling, the Pandours might be allowed to plunder.

Theſe, however, are ſcenes in which the picturesque ſtrongly prevails; but there are a number of others, where the whole is in a high and prevailing degree beautiful, but where there are touches of the other character which give ſpirit to its ſoftneſs; and this is what in many parts of my Eſſay I have endeavoured to point out. For inſtance, in the moſt ſimply *beautiful* river the cur-

rent will partially undermine the banks, and in places diſcover the ſoil, the roots of trees, or beds of rocks; there will be places where cattle come down to the water, and where ſtones and broken gravel will be left on the ſhore; there will be various interruptions to ſoftneſs and ſmoothneſs, which inſtead of deſtroying, or weakening, enhance their charms: but if you renounce the pictureſque, and make choice of unmixed beauty *only*, all theſe muſt either be deſtroyed, or in a great meaſure concealed: and after all, we ſhould never forget that the beautiful is no more the immediate reſult of ſmoothneſs, undulation, and ſerpentine lines, than the pictureſque is of roughneſs, abruptneſs, and ſudden variation; and that beauty, the moſt free from any thing rough, is ſtill very different from what Mr. Brown intended for beauty, as I hope to ſhew more fully towards the end of this Letter.

Perhaps

Perhaps you will tell me I have miſtaken your meaning; that by beauty you do not mean to confine yourſelf to what is merely ſmooth and undulating, nor to to exclude many of thoſe natural circumſtances which though rough and abrupt, yet when not too prevalent, accord with, and add to the general effect; which effect is beauty. Should you ſay ſo, you will ſay preciſely what I have ſaid throughout my book: but in that caſe what is the diſpute about? You agree with me in my diſtinction between the two characters; they muſt be either mixed or unmixed: if you take beauty alone, ſeparated from the pictureſque, you muſt not admit of any thing rough or abrupt with what is ſmooth and undulating, (except where nature has indiviſibly mixed them together, or where they are ſoftened and diſguiſed by other circumſtances) elſe it is not *unmixed* beauty according to our notions. If you

once admit of a mixture of the picturesque, the whole question will be about the *degree* of mixture, which must of course depend on the general character of the place, that of the particular spot, and its situation. But then all you have said about beauty in contradistinction to picturesqueness, as far as I can judge, has no object; for who ever thought (unless in some very particular cases) of introducing picturesqueness *exclusive* of beauty into garden scenes, or near the mansion?

No one indeed can doubt, that the beautiful ought chiefly to be attended to near the house: yet there are situations, where the prevailing character of beauty, (that is, a greater proportion of softness than of abruptness,) would not so well accord with the style of the place, but where that false beauty of Mr. Brown would totally destroy it. The strongest instance I ever met with of the truth

truth of this poſition, was an alteration propoſed by a profeſſed improver at Powis Caſtle. One of the moſt ſtriking points in that noble place, is a view through an arch-way after paſſing through an inward court. The mountains which divide Shropſhire from Montgomeryſhire, (and which from the grandeur of their character, if not from their height, well deſerve that name,) appear almoſt in the center of it; beyond the arch-way projects a rock, a ſort of abrupt promontory, ſhooting forward from that on which the caſtle is built: on this is a terras ſurrounded by an old maſſive baluſtrade, ſuch as the maſſiveneſs of the caſtle required: ſteps of the ſame character deſcend from it to the bottom of the rock, great part of which is mantled with ivy, ſome of whoſe luxuriant ſhoots twine round the baluſters. The effect which this projecting terras has in throwing off the mountains,—the richneſs of the fore-ground made by its ivied baluſ-

trade,—its light and ſhadow,—the perfect union of its character with the mountains and the caſtle,—can hardly be conceived by thoſe who have not ſeen it. The profeſſor propoſed to blow up this rock and all its accompaniments with gunpowder, in order to make the whole ground ſmooth, and gently falling from the caſtle; in ſhort, to place this ancient irregular fabrick, on a regular green ſlope. The noble owner, both from his own natural judgment and feeling, and from the advice of Mr. Knight, to whom he mentioned the propoſal, not only rejected it, but has repaired all that was broken and defaced in this terras; and has preſerved, in its true character, what would have been equally regretted by the painter, by the antiquary, and by every man of natural judgment and reflection.

Too many inſtances might probably be produced, where ſuch ſacrilege has not been pre-

prevented; and nothing can ſhew in ſo ſtrong a light, the dangerous tendency of recommending a narrow excluſive attention to beauty as a ſeparate quality, even where "the habitation and convenience of man "are to be improved," inſtead of a liberal and enlarged attention to beauty in its more general ſenſe, to character, and to the *genius loci.* It alſo ſhews the danger of throwing contempt on the ſtudy of the pictureſque, and of the principles of painting; for had this profeſſor acquired the leaſt knowledge of either, he could not have made ſuch a propoſal. You, who might well have guarded both preſent and future profeſſors from ſuch blind undiſtinguiſhing attachment to *ſyſtem,* have rather ſanctioned it by your precepts, though I truſt you would not by your practice.

I remember your being conſulted about the improvements at Ferney Hall, a ſmall

place

place in the neighbourhood of Mr. Knight, the moſt ſtriking feature of which is a rocky dell near the houſe. I was extremely pleaſed to hear that you had aſked Mr. Knight's advice with regard to the management of that part, acknowledging that you had not been ſo converſant as himſelf in that ſtyle of ſcenery.

This inſtance of your diffidence, and of your wiſh to draw knowledge from others, not merely to impreſs them with an idea of your own, was what firſt made me deſirous of being known to you. The character I heard of your drawings added to that deſire; and as I was perſuaded that the ſame diffidence, and readineſs to liſten to advice, would lead you to correct any defects they might have, I felt great hopes that the art of landſcape-gardening would be fixed on better principles than it had hitherto been; for I little imagined that you would ſtrive to leſſen

leſſen the conſequence of that art, to which you are indebted for your ſuperiority in your own.

Thoſe drawings of your's which were ſhewn to me, (when conſidered as thoſe of an improver, and not of a profeſſed artiſt) manifeſted talents which made me wiſh to know their author. You will forgive me, however, if I mention in my own juſtification, and by no means with an intention of hurting you, that they ſtill (according to my conceptions) pointed out reaſons for recommending to you what I did, and do ſtrongly recommend—a ſtudy of the higher artiſts; for it is a ſtudy which never ſhould be remitted, either by the painter, or the improver. In the ſame note* I alſo mentioned what I thought a very neceſſary caution to all profeſſors of your art; not leſs ſo than to thoſe of painting: I mean the danger of

* Eſſay on the Picturesque, page 351.

becoming

becoming manneriſts. The improver particularly, without the ſtudy of the higher artiſts joined to that of varied nature, is ſure to get into a habit of common-place forms; of rounds and ovals, and diſtinct clump-like maſſes. Theſe, by general effects of breadth and tinting, he may diſguiſe in his drawings, and thus his own eyes, and thoſe of his employers will learn to acquieſce in them, nay, to be partial to ſuch forms; and it ſhould always be remembered, that Kent, a painter by profeſſion, (a bad one it is true,) had been ſo accuſtomed to conſider objects as an improver, that at laſt he could only copy the little beeches he had planted.

I am ſorry you ſhould ſuppoſe that many pages in my Eſſay are pointed againſt your opinions; I can ſay with great truth, that there is ſcarcely one whole page pointed at them. I have, indeed, canvaſſed with great freedom

freedom all opinions that appeared to me erroneous, without enquiring who might have adopted them; and if I have unintentionally wounded you through Mr. Brown, I am, on every account, ſincerely grieved that you ſtood within the line of fire.

The reſpectability of your profeſſion, I never meant to call in queſtion, though I will frankly own, that, from what I have ſaid, there was ſufficient reaſon for your ſtanding forth in its defence: I was anxious, on the contrary, that it ſhould have a reſpectability which it hitherto had not deſerved, by being founded on more juſt, more enlarged, and more liberal principles. It was partly with that view (and I hope I may ſay ſo without preſumption) that I wiſhed to cultivate your acquaintance; and I ſhould not have courted the profeſſor, had I wiſhed to lower the profeſſion. You are the firſt of that profeſſion whoſe acquaintance I ever did deſire, for you

are

are the firſt I ever thought likely to do honour to it, by honouring and cultivating a higher art, and by conſidering that as the true road to fame and excellence in your own.

There is only one way in which I can account for the deſire you have ſo ſtrongly manifeſted throughout this Letter, of lowering the art of painting: you find yourſelf at the head of your own art; but with no mean talents for one branch of the art of painting, you in that, are far from having the ſame pre-eminence. You therefore ſeem to me to have uſed your endeavours, not only to ſhew that there is much leſs affinity between the two arts than I have ſuppoſed, but to degrade the art itſelf, and to exalt your own upon its ruins; for nothing ſurely but ſuch a *jalouſie de métier*, could have induced you to have made any ſort of alluſion, any kind of parallel, between the uncontrouled

opinions

opinions of ſavages, and an art, the principles of which had been inveſtigated with ſuch care, and its practice enlarged and refined by a ſucceſſion of ſo many illuſtrious men. To make this illuſtration the more plauſible, you have oppoſed gardening [not landſcape-gardening] to the painter's ſtudies of *wild* nature. But wherefore of *wild* nature excluſively, when, as I obſerved before, the ſtudies of many of them are taken from the moſt highly embelliſhed nature? I am willing to ſuppoſe, that you mean no more by *wild* nature, than ſimple nature—nature untouched by art; and *that*, perhaps, would have been a more accurate and candid manner of ſtating it; but then *ſimple* nature would have raiſed ideas of a variety of ſoft and delightful ſcenes, whereas *wild* is often uſed for what is rude and ſavage, and you might not be ſorry to give that bias to the minds of your readers. As this wildneſs

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and rudeneſs of painters landſcapes, is conſtantly brought as an argument againſt the affinity between painting, and even *landſcape* gardening, it will be of great uſe towards clearing up this diſputed point, to examine in what this wildneſs conſiſts—how far it extends—what parts of ſuch wild nature, when arranged by the painter, may be imitated by the gardener, even in dreſſed ſcenes, and what may not. In order to do it in the faireſt manner poſſible, I will put out of the queſtion Claude Lorrain, and all who ſtudied highly ornamented nature, and will take ſuch painters as Mola and Gaſpar Pouſſin. Examine the forms of their trees—their groups—the general diſpoſition of them—the connection—the manner in which the diſtance is introduced between them—and in which they accompany buildings and water. I believe you will own that all this would, in many of their

pictures,

pictures, not ill accord with any kind of ſcenery, and that many of theſe forms have much real beauty, as well as picturesque effect; that they have a variety of highly pleaſing outlines, flowing, and blending into each other, and giving a ſoftneſs* to the water they accompany; very different both from the *abruptneſs* of clumps, and from the naked *hardneſs* of artificial rivers. If this be true, much the greater and more conſpicuous part of a mere painter's landſcape, might, without impropriety, be allied with, nay, even make a part of a dreſſed ſcene. What part then of ſuch pictures would be out of character in highly poliſhed ſcenery? It is in an *extended* ſenſe the fore-ground, or what might be termed the ground-plan of the picture; this often conſiſts of rough and broken ground, and of other rude objects

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 109.

that give play, variety, and effect of light and ſhadow, as well as variety and richneſs of tint; ſhould it be poſſible, however, that in certain caſes the variety and effect of a painter's fore-ground could, without rudeneſs, be imitated in a garden ſcene, I imagine you would think it no ſmall advantage.

But are all unimproved ſcenes in nature rude? are there not in the moſt pictureſque diſtricts—are there not in foreſts—lawns and openings of the ſofteſt turf, divided from the general ſcenery by an intricate ſkreen of thorns and hollies, mixed with larger trees, and enriched with tufts of natural flowers, which have altogether not only a beautiful, but even a dreſſed appearance? What is the difference between ſuch a piece of wild nature, and one of Mr. Brown's garden ſcenes in which he has beſt ſucceeded? In his, the ground is mowed; it is more exactly, and therefore more

more ſtiffly levelled, and has not the ſame undulation, or (to borrow an expreſſion from Mr. Burke) "that change of ſurface, "continual yet hardly perceptible at any "point, which forms one of the great con- "ſtituents of beauty." Inſtead of thoſe tufts, thickets, and groups, whoſe playful outline and diſpoſition create that *beauti-ful* intricacy which leads the eye a kind of wanton chace, his are clumps regularly dug, and conſequently with a hard outline. Inſtead of that varied ſurface, where the mixture of broken tints gives ſuch value to the more uniform green, and ſuch delight to the painter's eye—the unvaried colour and ſurface of dug ground, abruptly ſucceed to the no leſs unvaried ſurface and colour of mowed graſs. Inſtead of the eaſy bends of a path, there are the regular and conſequently more formal and

edgy ſweeps of a gravel walk. He has indeed the advantage in diverſity of plants, in gaiety and brilliancy of colours; an advantage, however, which has its danger, and which is liable to great abuſe. But let the ſame kind of ſcene (and there muſt be thouſands of them) be placed in a warmer climate—in the ſouthern part of North America. There ſuch groups and thickets would be compoſed of the various oaks or maples; of tulip trees, or acacias mixed with magnolias, cedars, kalmeas, rhododendrons, andromedas, &c.; the wild vines, and Virginia creeper climbing up the larger trees, and looſely hanging from their boughs: Would the making all thoſe tufts and groups ſeparate, and clump-like, and digging round them—would levelling the whole ground, and mowing what flowers the ſheep had ſpared—would the

making

making of a gravel walk acroſs or around the whole opening improve the *beauty* of ſuch a ſcene? for the convenience of walking, and the look of neatneſs, and habitation, are ſeparate conſiderations. Can any one doubt that there are in wild, that is, unimproved nature, ſcenes more ſoft, more beautiful, than any thing which modern gardening has produced? Nay, that the peculiar beauties of ſuch ſcenes have been ill imitated, and the true principles of thoſe beauties ill underſtood? In the ſame proportion that natural groups and thickets are intricate yet beautiful, clumps are abrupt, without being pictureſque; for the line of digging is hard, and renders the round, the oval, or whatever be the ſhape, diſtinct and formal. It clearly appears to me, that all theſe are defects, and they may be avoided, in a great degree, by endeavouring to follow, not to improve by counteracting, the

happy accidents of nature; and that the ſtiff manner of levelling the ground, (though perhaps an object of greater difficulty,) might be corrected from the ſame model. I wiſh, however, not to be miſunderſtood, as if I condemned levelling, digging, mowing, and gravel walks: where, in a part meant to be pleaſure-ground, the ſurface is rough and uneven, it muſt of courſe be levelled and made ſmooth; where plants will not otherwiſe grow luxuriantly, the ground (for ſome time at leaſt) muſt be dug; where ſheep are not admitted, it muſt be mowed; and a gravel walk, beſides the great comfort and convenience, has a look of neatneſs and high keeping that is extremely pleaſing, though upon a different principle from the natural path. What I mean to ſhew is, that there are ſcenes in wild, unimproved nature, *of the ſame kind* as thoſe in which modern garden-

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ing moſt excels—ſcenes produced by accident, not deſign—more ſoft, more truly beautiful in every reſpect, than the imitations of them:* they are alſo beautiful on the principles of painting, not of gardening, though thoſe principles ought to be, and I hope will be, the ſame. I will here juſt ſlightly mention, what I may perhaps enlarge upon ſome future time, that in the old Italian gardens, where architecture and gardening were mixed together, effects were produced, to which nothing *of the ſame kind* could be found in unembelliſhed nature.

As you have tried to degrade the painter's ſtudies, by comparing them with the opinion of ſavages; ſo you have ſtriven to

* I believe, however, that thoſe who have been uſed to conſider Mr. Brown's works as perfection, think a little like the Chevalier Taylor, the famous oculiſt: he uſed to ſay, that there was as much difference between an eye that he had bruſhed, and an unimproved eye, as between a rough diamond, and a brilliant.

exalt modern gardening, by comparing it to our glorious conſtitution. That the Engliſh conſtitution is the happy medium between the liberty of ſavages, and the reſtraint of deſpotic government, I do not merely acknowledge—I feel it with pride and exultation; but that pride and exultation would ſink into ſhame and deſpondency, ſhould the parallel you have made, ever become juſt: ſhould the freedom, energy, and variety of our minds, give place to tameneſs and monotony; ſhould our opinions be preſcribed to us, and, like our places, be moulded into one form. A much apter and more inſtructive parallel might have been drawn between our conſtitution, and the art you have ſo much wronged. That art, like the old feudal government, meagre, hard, and gothic in its beginning, was mellowed and ſoftened by long experience and ſucceſſive trials; and not leſs

improved

improved in ſpirit and energy. Such was the progreſs of our conſtitution, ſuch is its character; ſuch alſo was the progreſs of painting, ſuch the character of its higheſt productions, at its brighteſt period. The later artiſts from Carlo Marat, loſt that firmneſs, variety, and energy, and became mannered, cold, and inſipid. Such indeed is the natural progreſs of human arts and inſtitutions: the progreſs from oppreſſion to anarchy, (of which we have ſeen ſuch an awful example) is not more natural, than from the eaſe of freedom and ſecurity, to indolence and apathy: let England beware; let her guard no leſs againſt the one, than againſt the other extreme; they generate each other in ſucceſſion, for apathy invites oppreſſion, and oppreſſion is the parent of anarchy.

Having ſaid thus much with reſpect to your general defence of Mr. Brown's ſyſtem

tem of improvement, and your illuſtration of its excellence, I will next conſider your defence of the detail of his practice. If, as you ſay, no man of taſte can heſitate between the natural group of trees compoſed of various growths, and a formal patch of firs (and, I will venture to add, of any other trees) which, as you well obſerve, "too often disfigure a lawn under "the name of a clump"—why not ſtrive to imitate thoſe natural groups, by attending to the principle on which they pleaſe? The ſtrong argument againſt Mr. Brown, and that which I ſtated in my Eſſay,* is, that in the courſe of a long practice, and therefore with many opportunities of ſeeing their effects, he never made a clump like a natural group, though he did make many natural groups like clumps; I therefore may fairly conclude that he preferred

* Eſſay on the Picturesque, page 359.

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the latter: and as he never (as far as I have obſerved,) connected one group with another, but always detached them as much as poſſible, I may alſo infer that he ſtudied diſtinctneſs, not connection.

Now, unleſs I am totally wrong in all my notions, CONNECTION is the leading principle of your art, and it is the principle that has been, of all others, the moſt flagrantly and ſyſtematically violated. It is by means of this *ſyſtem* of making every thing diſtinct and ſeparate, that Mr. Brown has been enabled to do ſuch rapid and extenſive miſchief; and thence it is that he is ſo much more an object of the painter's indignation than his ſtrait-lined predeceſſors. He was a mere gardener, but he choſe to be a landſcape-gardener, without knowing the firſt principles of a landſcape: the conſequences have been ſuch as might be expected; for as nothing is ſo eaſily, ſo quickly deſtroyed as connection,

nection, ſo nothing is reſtored with greater difficulty, or by a more tedious proceſs.

Two of the principal defects in the compoſition of landſcapes, whether real or painted, are the oppoſite extremes of objects being too crouded, or too ſcattered: your cenſure, therefore, of ſingle trees dotted over the whole ſurface of a park, or any other ground, is perfectly juſt. Such ſcattered trees are rendered much more diſguſting by heavy cradle fences, and, unleſs in very good ſoils, they alſo (as you obſerve) are generally ſtarving. I can ſpeak very ſtrongly as to the bad conſequence of this practice in every point of view, from its having been in too great a degree my own; and it is by no means the only inſtance in which I could offer my own former practice (for I do not perſevere in what I think wrong) as a warning to others.

There cannot be a doubt, that the moſt certain

certain expedient for producing future beauty, is to prepare and fence the ground, and to ſet more plants than are meant to remain; for the young plants muſt neither be ſtunted, browſed, nor ſtarved. But where thoſe maſſes (as is uſually the caſe) are formed of trees of equal growths, and left cloſe together in one thick lump, the *variety* they give to *any* ground ſcarcely deſerves that name. The remedy I propoſed* (after ſtating the defects of the uſual method) was to mix a large proportion of the lower growths in every plantation; this, in my opinion, would not only prevent their flat, heavy, uniform appearance, but would alſo furniſh means for varying and ſoftening the abrupt lines of their outſide boundaries, and correcting that ſolitary, inſulated look which they ſtill would have. The method of doing it which I ſhould recommend, would be to

* Eſſay on the Picturesque, page 309.

take

take trees, both of the larger and ſmaller growths, from the plantation itſelf, (after they are grown ſtrong enough to reſiſt animals) and to tranſplant them on the outſide of the fence; where a ſtiff formal outline is apt to remain, even when the fence itſelf has been taken away. As theſe plants would be to be carried ſo ſhort a way, though large, they might be removed with ſafety; and would want no fence, but merely to be ſtaked till they had taken root. Their effect would alſo be immediate; they would at once break, vary, and ſoften the hard line of the clump by partially concealing it, which trees alone would not effect; but by ſuch a mixture of thorns, hollies, &c. with foreſt trees, the moſt painter-like groups and thickets might be formed.

This ſeems to me the true uſe of planting trees and buſhes detached from the larger maſſes; and thus much it may be ſufficient

ſufficient to add to what I had before ſaid in my Eſſay, with reſpect to thoſe ſolitary lumps of various ſizes;* whoſe principle indeed is the very oppoſite to that of connection, and by which at this moment the greateſt part of the parks and grounds of improved places throughout the kingdom, are disjoined from the ſurrounding landſcape. It requires no acquaintance with the principles of painting, to make any uniformly thick plantation, from a clump, to a large wood; but to vary and to connect thoſe plantations with others, and with the more detached trees and groups —to compoſe and arrange the different parts of the different landſcapes of a whole place, without injuring the unity of that whole, certainly does demand an acquaintance, and no ſlight one, with thoſe principles: the firſt is the province of the

* Eſſay on the Picturesque, page 291.

mere

mere gardener, the latter of the landſcape-gardener only.

As to the belt, I thought it had been quite extinct, and never likely to revive; but under your protection it may perhaps again crawl about the ground,

"And like a wounded ſnake, drag its ſlow length along."

As "I have ſcotched the ſnake, not killed it," I muſt renew the attack. You very truly obſerve, "that the love of ſecluſion and ſafety is no leſs natural than that of liberty, and that the mind is equally diſpleaſed with exceſs of liberty, or of reſtraint, when either are too apparent." But why is this addreſſed to me? to me, who have in the ſtrongeſt manner cenſured the paſſion for *mere* extent*—for the removal of boundaries without any other object—for extent that is to be admired, like virtue, for its own ſake—to be appa-

* Eſſay on the Picturesque, page 298.

rent,

rent, and meaſured with the eye as well as with the chain. No one can doubt the neceſſity of encloſing a park, or a pleaſure-ground, and of hiding (at leaſt in a great meaſure) that encloſure; the only queſtion is about the mode of hiding it.

There are two different ways in which the owner's vanity (a very powerful and common agent) may operate on this occaſion, according to the extent of the ground encloſed.

If it ſhould be ſmall, he will moſt ſincerely wiſh that it ſhould not be known where the boundary goes; though he may not take the proper method of concealment.

If, on the contrary, the extent ſhould be very great, the owner may as ſincerely wiſh to *mark* that extent, by diſtinctly marking the *courſe* of the boundary; though he would be equally deſirous of concealing the *fence itſelf*.

But if the owner happen to be a lover of painting, and to have neither the dread of diſcovering a ſmall, nor the ambition of diſplaying a large extent, he will wiſh the concealments in any caſe to be ſuch as will accord with the reſt of the landſcape; nor will he be ſhocked if now and then part of the wall, or the pales ſhould appear.

The perſon who has a *ſmall* extent, will wiſh to have a ſcreen of uniform thickneſs, as an impenetrable diſguiſe; not conſidering that the *uniformity* of the diſguiſe betrays it, and that the ſtranger ſoon gueſſes what is behind.

Then, again, the vanity of him who has encloſed an immenſe compaſs, will be pleaſed that it ſhould be marked out diſtinctly by a uniformly high plantation; ſo that all the neighbours round may not only have to relate how many miles the whole circuit extends, but may be able to ſhew the exact line

line of it to the wondering ſtranger, and to make him trace it with his eye.

If to theſe motives of vanity in the poſſeſſor, we add the motives of ſelf-intereſt in the profeſſor, it will be eaſy to account for the introduction and continuance of belts. The invention of them (a term never more miſuſed than in the preſent inſtance) is beyond all others obvious, and the thing being once eſtabliſhed, it ſaves all reflection on the ſtyle and character of the part it is to paſs through; then it might be both laid out and executed, not only by a common gardener, but by a common labourer, without the profeſſor's having ever ſeen the place; for it is only to meaſure a certain number of yards from the fence to the outſide of the plantation, and to ſtuff it with trees, leaving a certain ſpace for the drive. It is therefore highly the intereſt of every profeſſor, who is more deſirous of gain than reputation, to

work by *general receipts*; ſuch as clumps, belts, and ſerpentine canals with uniformly levelled banks, ſo long as their employers are kind enough to be ſatisfied with them; and I will own, that ſhould my Eſſay have the influence, which, as a very zealous author, I muſt wiſh, though I do not expect it to have, many an honeſt profeſſor of improvement muſt, for want of education, ſeek his bread in ſome other way.

You allow that the drive through ſuch belts is tedious, and that the dulneſs encreaſes with its length: their inſides are therefore condemned. What then is the effect of their outſides with reſpect to the general landſcape? which, after all, ought to have ſome weight with the landſcape-gardener. They preſent one conſpicuous, uniform, unvaried ſcreen; meagre and drawn up, and differing in character from all that is on either ſide of it; in reality, a gigantic *hedge*, that wants

wants to be hidden, as much, or more than the fence it hides. Obſerve the difference of thoſe accidental ſcreens to many of the old parks, where thickets of thorns and hollies, groups, and ſingle trees are continued quite to the wall, or the pales; and where, till you ſee the boundary, (which, however, from its moſſes and ivy is at leaſt a very picturesque object) you might ſuppoſe yourſelf near the center, not at the extremity of the park. Theſe ſurely are the ſcreens which ought to be imitated by landſcape-gardeners, for they accord with the reſt of the ſcenery, and at every ſtep form landſcapes; and where perfect concealment is the object, they are beſt calculated to produce it without diſcovering the intention. Still, however, if the owner ſays, I do not care about landſcape and variety, I like uniformity and continued ſhade, he is quite in the right to pleaſe himſelf, though it may be dull

to others; it anſwers his purpoſe, and a very good one; but let not two ſuch diſtinct ideas, as convenience and beauty, be confounded.

The belt you have ſo accurately deſcribed, "of one uniform breadth, with a drive as "uniform, ſerpentining through the middle "of it," is, I believe, what, with little difference, has been moſt generally made; and it anſwers perfectly to its name. But ſuch a plantation as you afterwards have propoſed, of "various breadths, and its outline adapted to "the natural ſhape of the ground," is hardly a belt, or at leaſt is not Mr. Brown's belt, and I criticiſed what had been, not what might be, made. I am very ready to acknowledge the great ſuperiority of ſuch a belt; a ſuperiority which encreaſes, as it grows more unlike the thing it is named from: but ſtill you muſt excuſe me if I ſuggeſt (not indeed by way of ſtrict argument)

ment) that you have ſhewn the dulneſs of *any* belt in a way which will have much more effect than any thing I have written, by preſenting a much more lively image of its tireſome monotony. You, the defender of belts, can ſo little bear the *ideal* confinement, even of your own highly improved belt, that after ſkirting near the edges, and looking wiſtfully out of it, at laſt finding an opening, you fairly eſcape from it entirely, " to " enjoy the unconfined view of diſtant proſ- " pects:" an example that, I believe, would be followed by moſt perſons in the ſame ſituation.

It is true, that I have very earneſtly and generally recommended it to gentlemen who have places, that they ſhould qualify themſelves for becoming their own landſcape-gardeners, by one of the moſt pleaſing and liberal of all ſtudies; that of the principles of painting, the works of painters and

of nature.* This you think (perhaps with too much partiality towards profeſſed improvers) might tend to ſuppreſs—not the profeſſion—but the *art* itſelf. I cannot help thinking, that ſo far from ſuppreſſing or injuring either, it would, on the contrary, be of great advantage to both. As to ſuppreſſing the art, you muſt recollect that there was a time when there were profeſſors of eloquence; there are none now: is the art ſuppreſſed? Would the great orators of this day—who rival thoſe of Greece and Rome—would they have had more variety, energy, and effect, had ſome profeſſor taught them the routine of eloquence, its tropes and figures, and endeavoured to mould their minds to his conceptions?

Of all the arts, none is more adapted to men of liberal education, who paſs much of their time at their own country-ſeats, than

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 375.

landſcape-

landſcape-gardening. They muſt be continually among landſcapes, (for there are few diſtricts, unleſs *very much improved*, that do not furniſh ſomething for the painter,) and with the leaſt attention to pictures and to compoſition, the principles of landſcape-gardening would inſenſibly preſs themſelves upon their minds; and in moſt points the practice is far from difficult. Not ſo with architecture, though a ſtudy highly becoming every man of taſte and property, and intimately connected with gardening: models of architecture are thinly ſpread; the occaſions of imitating them are rare, and the practical part requires a very different degree of accuracy. There are alſo many arts whoſe theory is curious and intereſting, but in which the method of acquiring practical knowledge is tedious, or diſguſting. Such is medicine; a ſcience which often illuſtrates the art of gardening more happily than one might

might ſuppoſe. No man voluntarily frequents hoſpitals and ſick rooms, as he does woods and rivers, and all the parts of landſcape; yet every man would do well to know enough of the general effect of drugs, and of their particular effect on his habit, to guard againſt the haſty deciſion of, perhaps, an able phyſician, but who has neither the ſame opportunities of ſtudying the conſtitution of his patient, nor the ſame motives for ſtudying it. This will be very readily applied to the other art.

All quackery, I allow to be bad, in either of the arts, and much ſhould in both be left to nature; but he who quacks himſelf, has an extreme intereſt in his patient, and will be afraid of violent remedies; not ſo the bold empyric, who undertakes to improve a place, or a conſtitution. As you have ſtarted the idea of this illuſtration, I will carry it on a little farther. Many places, like many con-

conſtitutions, want but little to be done to them, and an honeſt and able profeſſor in either art, will do but little. Ignorance, on the other hand, is always raſh and meddling; and the deſign of my work is to guard againſt the raſhneſs and active ignorance of quacks. But were the maſs of profeſſors in your art to mix theory with practice; were they to ſtudy the works of painters, and to compare them with nature; were they to do ſo with as much diligence, as the eminent profeſſors of medicine ſtudy the works of former phyſicians of every age and country, and compare their doctrines and experiments with the varying characters of diſeaſes in real ſubjects—the reſpectability of the profeſſion would be effectually eſtabliſhed, and we ſhould conſult the profeſſors of either art with equal confidence in their ſkill.

Whatever effect my recommendation may produce, believe me your profeſſion is

in

in no danger. Should the profeſſors of it in general (as indeed muſt be the caſe) improve in proportion to the taſte and knowledge of their employers, *that* encreaſed taſte, and the knowledge of theory joined to practice, will ſecure them employment, even among thoſe who are the moſt capable of directing their own works; for whenever juſt and new ideas are to be acquired from a profeſſor, every affluent man who has extenſive plans of improvement, will certainly (unleſs prevented by conceit, or avarice) be deſirous of conſulting him. But in any caſe there will always remain a ſufficient number of rich and helpleſs perſons, who muſt endeavour to purchaſe what they have not themſelves. It is not to ſuch men (who muſt always be directed,) that I have addreſſed my advice; yet ſtill they are not unintereſted in its ſucceſs: for, as I before obſerved, the taſte and knowledge of the general maſs of profeſſors, will naturally

encreaſe

encreaſe in proportion to that of the general maſs of their employers, and conſequently thoſe who are unable to act themſelves, will at leaſt be directed by more ſkilful guides.

After all, ſhould any perverſe, ignorant, and *deſperate amateurs* (as they have humourouſly been named) take one part of my advice only; and, contrary to its ſpirit and obvious meaning, boldly act for themſelves without any previous ſtudy or reflexion—they ſtill would ſeldom occaſion ſuch extenſive and irreparable miſchief as the regular ſyſtem of clearing and levelling; and as they probably would have no imitators, their improvements would be confined to one ſpot, and one point of time. Their extravagancies alſo, though miſchievous, might be amuſing; and, like other wanton, licentious effects of freedom, as pumping, ducking, tarring and feathering, have a mixture of the barbarous and the ludicrous—

at

at once ſhock and divert you. Even the revengeful and ſtudied cruelty of ſavages, horrid as it is, yet ſtill is leſs odious and diſguſting than the cold, ſettled, regular *ſyſtem* of oppreſſion and torture of the inquiſition.

The method of applying general rules, (as you have remarked) can only be learnt by practice; but I ſhould much doubt whether there be any plan, or any medicine "proper almoſt in every caſe." I have read indeed of a *panacea*, but I believe it to be as rare as a plan of improvement of the ſame accommodating nature: certainly the character will neither ſuit Mr. Brown's plan, nor James's powder; and it would, in my idea, be no ſmall impeachment to a phyſician, could it be foretold, before he had ſeen his patient, that he would preſcribe that excellent medicine, whatever the diſorder, or the ſort of fever might be; for that is the true parallel with Mr. Brown's anticipated plan, which

which was not to be executed (as you have ſuppoſed) in a naked country. But indeed a phyſician who, like Mr. Brown, had but *one* plan of operations, muſt treat all diſorders, Sangrado-like, in the ſame manner.

Thoſe who affect to deſpiſe all proſpects, as beneath the notice of lovers of painting, deſerve the title you have indirectly beſtowed upon them (and perhaps deſigned for me) of faſtidious connoiſſeurs. I muſt obſerve on this occaſion, that there is a wide difference between deſpiſing proſpects oneſelf, and rallying thoſe who deſpiſe every thing elſe—the mere proſpect-hunters. I muſt alſo obſerve, that my attack was not directly made upon the excluſive love of proſpects, though a very fair ſubject for raillery. It was levelled againſt the paſſion for whitening objects—the paſſion for diſtinctneſs; and the proſpect-hunter was brought in to illuſtrate the effects of that paſſion.

paſſion.* If I do deſpiſe proſpects, I am conſtantly acting againſt my inclination by climbing up, not only high hills, but towers and churches; certainly not for the painter's landſcape. In my own place I have three diſtinct proſpects, — bird's-eye views ſeen from high hills—of which I am not a little proud, and to which I carry all my gueſts of every deſcription. If they like nothing elſe in the place, I do not converſe with them on pictures, or landſcape-gardening; but if they have the affectation I have ſometimes been witneſs to, that of holding all proſpects in contempt as unworthy the attention of a man of true taſte, I do not feel very eager to converſe with them on any ſubject.

A proſpect of mere extent, if that extent be very great, has, without any ſtriking features, a powerful effect on the mind. If to extent you add a richly wooded and cul-

* Eſſay on the Picturesque, page 179.

tivated

tivated country, with a varied boundary of hills or mountains; and to that again, effects of water and buildings, it is enchantment. If from a high ſummit you look from mountain to mountain, acroſs their craggy breaks, and down unto their receſſes, it is awful and ſublime. Yet neither ſuch grand nor ſuch beautiful proſpects as thoſe which I have juſt deſcribed, nor yet many others of intermediate ſtyles and degrees, are in general proper ſubjects for pictures. This I imagine to ariſe, not from the height whence they are viewed, but from another cauſe which equally operates on all views; namely, the want of any objects of importance either in the fore-ground, or the middle diſtance. Apply this to any view, even to ſuch as are taken from a low ſtation, and where the extent is limited: If it want thoſe nearer objects, it will ſeldom ſuit the painter in point of compoſition; though, from the reſources of

his art, (by means of broken tints—of breadth and effect of light and ſhade,—by his management of the ſky, &c.) he may contrive in repreſenting ſuch a view, to diſguiſe, or compenſate its original defect. With regard to proſpects, they are for the moſt part taken from the higheſt and openeſt part of a hill, where there is the leaſt obſtruction, and conſequently where there is ſeldom either fore-ground, or ſecond diſtance. On that account they do not make good landſcapes; and on that circumſtance, as I conceive, is founded the principal diſtinction, not merely between a landſcape and a proſpect, but generally between what is, and is not proper for a picture in point of compoſition. Any view that is unbroken, unvaried, undivided by any objects in the nearer parts, whether it be from a mountain or a plain, is, generally ſpeaking, ill ſuited to the painter.

Conſider

Conſider for a moment what would be the effect in any good compoſition of the *limited* kind, either real or painted, were all the near objects ſwept away, and only the diſtant ones left. Try the ſame experiment on any admired compoſition of a great maſter, in which an extenſive diſtance is introduced: let all that in any way intercepts, breaks, divides, and accompanies that diſtance—all that throws it off, and marks the gradations—all the ſtrong maſſes, the powerful tones of colour, the diſtinct and forcible touches that contraſt with its ſoft fading tints,—let all be removed—it becomes a mere proſpect, and nothing elſe. Again, (to prove, as they do in arithmetic, ſubtraction by addition) let the objects taken from ſuch a picture, be added to a mere proſpect; it becomes a compoſition, a painter's landſcape.

With reſpect to the point of ſight being taken high, *that* has frequently a very grand

effect; and that Titian thought ſo, is plain from the numerous prints after his compoſitions; in many of which, as it may be proved by the height of the horizontal line, he has ſuppoſed himſelf on a conſiderable eminence. Where beauty is the painter's object (as was the caſe with Claude) it is certainly more judicious to place the horizontal line lower, which he accordingly does.

All this ſeems to point out, that though proſpects are not in general ſuch compoſitions as painters ſelect, yet that both the ſeparate parts, and the general effect of each proſpect—its maſſes—its boundaries—its compoſition as a piece of diſtance, are to be judged of, like any other ſcene, on the principles of painting. I therefore can have no doubt, if two ſuch painters as Claude and Titian were obliged to paint two mere *proſpects*, that the proſpect which Claude choſe for his picture, would be the moſt generally

pleaſing

pleaſing among the pleaſing ones; and that which Titian choſe, the moſt ſtriking among the ſublime. In fact, the ſame diſtance, the grandeur of whoſe boundary, whoſe aerial perſpective, whoſe gradual diminution of tints we ſo much admire in a proſpect, forms a very principal part of many of Titian's, Claude's, and other painters' landſcapes; they only frame and accompany it.

There is, however, an obvious reaſon why *mere* proſpects, however exquiſitely painted, cannot have the effect of thoſe in nature. They are not *real*, and therefore do not excite the curioſity which reality does, both as to the particular ſpots, and the circumſtances attending them: as to the real geography of what is really ſpread out before us, and the many doubts, enquiries, and obſervations it ſuggeſts to the curious traveller, and alſo to the painter in his own line; who from ſuch eminences can beſt remark, what diſtricts promiſe the moſt intereſting ſcenery. Theſe

are the circumſtances which make the love of proſpects a natural propenſity, independently of their beauty; it was therefore unneceſſary to apologize for making uſe of too ſtrong an expreſſion, when you called curioſity an inherent paſſion of the human mind. That paſſion will very naturally account for the viſitors at Matlock having done what you, and I, and every one in the ſame ſituation, would probably have done; but why this conſideration ſhould have confirmed you in your opinion, that painting and gardening are leſs intimately related than you at firſt conceived them to be, it is difficult to gueſs.

Theſe two arts, according to a very uſual figure, I had called *ſiſters*; but I can have no objection to adopting your idea, and calling them huſband and wife; for the union is ſtill cloſer. You have not, indeed, aſſigned to your new-married couple their reſpective ſexes, but I can have no doubt about them.

Land-

Landſcape-gardening is clearly the lady, and I muſt ſay that you have taken a very unfair advantage of your intimacy with her. You have tried to make her elope; and you have proceeded, as ſeducers generally do, not only by flattering her on her own peculiar charms and accompliſhments, but by endeavouring to degrade her huſband in her eyes: one of the moſt powerful, but not the moſt honourable means of ſeduction. He that acts ſo, more than interferes between huſband and wife; not he who with equal love and regard for both, ſincerely tries to promote a laſting union. Whoſe aim it is to raiſe, not lower them in each other's eſteem; but at the ſame time to convince the wife that ſhe can never appear ſo amiable, or ſo reſpectable, as when cloſely united to her huſband; and I may add in this caſe, to ſuch a huſband.

When I came to the illuſtration which you have taken from Mr. Burke, and which,

in his Eſſay, is perfectly juſt and in its place, I was curious to ſee what uſe you would make of it; and I was greatly ſurprized to find how you had applied it: I hardly believed it at firſt, and ſome of my friends had the ſame heſitation, till they had read it a ſecond time. A *landſcape*-gardener, who is alſo an artiſt, can find no apter way of illuſtrating the habit of admiring fine pictures and bold pictureſque ſcenery, than by the habit of chewing tobacco! You ſuppoſe ſuch admiration may have the ſame kind of effect on *mental* taſte, as the uſe of ſuch a nauſeous herb has on the *ſenſe* of taſting—that of making it inſenſible to the beauty of milder ſcenes. You, therefore, by a kind of negative affirmation, inſinuate that my taſte is vitiated; not feeling that a habit of obſervation and ſelection, (even ſuppoſing it in a great meaſure directed towards the higher ſtyles of painting and of ſcenery,) acts very differently on the faculties of the mind,

mind, from what a ſtrong and perverſe taſte does on the palate; and that, far from deadening the organs, it makes them more alive to every fine ſenſation, in every ſtyle. Sir Joſhua Reynolds's enthuſiaſm for M. Angelo, and high admiration of Titian's landſcapes, did not make him leſs delighted with Correggio and Claude, with Watteau and Teniers; and he who felt all the ſavage grandeur of Salvator's ſcenery, equally enjoyed the view from his houſe on Richmond terras.

Whoever reads your Letter without having read my book, muſt probably conclude that I am a ſort of tyger, who paſs my life in a jungle, with no more idea of the ſofter beauties of nature than that animal. I fear I am not leſs expoſed to an imputation of a very different kind; and I ſhould not be ſurprized, were ſome wrong-headed friend of Mr. Gilpin to repreſent me as a man ſo in love with ſmoothneſs, as to have no reliſh

for

for what is rough, abrupt, and pictureſque. He might very plauſibly ſay, that, not contented with oppoſing Mr. Gilpin, my enthuſiaſm for beauty and its diſtinct qualities, had led me much farther; that I had gone beyond Mr. Burke, and, as if his arguments and illuſtrations on that ſubject were not ſufficient, had added whole chapters of my own. He might treat me as a falſe friend, and aſk whether a man can be a true lover of the pictureſque, who allows, that near the houſe it ought to be ſacrificed to neatneſs and convenience—who talks of the characteriſtic beauties of a lawn, of its ſmoothneſs and verdure; who dwells with rapture on the ſofter beauties of nature—on the fragrance and colours of flowers—on the profuſion of bloſſoms, and all the charms of ſpring.

I might thus be convicted of having no taſte or feeling for any thing, unleſs (as is ſometimes

ſometimes ſuppoſed to happen) the one poiſon ſhould expel the other.

I now come to the examples you have given, of different ſubjects which I am ſuppoſed to deſpiſe myſelf, and to wiſh others to deſpiſe, *becauſe* they are incapable of being painted. Before I make any remarks on the examples themſelves, I will beg leave to aſk you, whether you ſeriouſly think that any perſon was ever ſo abſurd as to declare, or even to think, that objects of ſight which were incapable of being painted, were *therefore* to be deſpiſed. Should you diſcover any perſon who had declared *that*, (or any thing which nearly approaches it,) to be his opinion—treat him as Dogberry deſired to be treated—ſet him down as an aſs—but no more think of arguing with him than with Dogberry, or his repreſentative. If it be merely a phantom you have raiſed, in order to combat it, I muſt ſay your talents might have been more worthily employed. It is never

never reckoned very creditable to diſplay one's wit on a butt who cannot retort; and thoſe poor fatherleſs opinions, which nobody owns, and nobody defends, muſt be conſidered in that light: the victories obtained over them both, are alſo much alike in point of glory and difficulty.

As to the examples themſelves, I imagine that a gravel walk and a ſhrubbery, not only may, but often have been painted, though they will not make good pictures. So have wide extended proſpects, and there is one mere bird's-eye view in Claude's *Liber Veritatis*. It might be thought uncandid to ſuppoſe, that you mean to reproach the art of painting with not being able to expreſs the *fragrance* of a ſhrubbery, though your words will bear that conſtruction: ſuch a conſtruction might alſo be ſupported by a note in the former part of your Letter*. You there obſerve (what a leſs keen obſerver might have

* Page 8.

diſcovered)

diſcovered) " that the *continual* moving, and lively agitation obſervable in herds of deer, is one of the circumſtances which painting cannot repreſent, *but* that it is not leſs an object of beauty and cheerfulneſs in park ſcenery." The ſame obſervation might have been made with equal truth and novelty on the warbling of birds, and its cheerful effect in garden ſcenery; for actual audible ſound is not *more* incapable of being painted, than actual continued motion; and real ſenſible fragrance is juſt upon the ſame footing.

After all, for what purpoſe is this circumſtance mentioned? is it to eſtabliſh the ſuperiority of nature over painting? I am very far from denying it. That of landſcape-gardening over landſcape-painting? there has been no queſtion about their reſpective ſuperiority. But if there had, how does it affect that queſtion? does the landſcape-gardener claim any merit in the grouping of deer, as he does in that of trees? does he

diſpoſe

diſpoſe and drill them, and direct their continual motion and lively action? Were there occaſion, it might be ſhewn, on the contrary, that in this reſpect the art of painting is much ſuperior. The painter does catch and record momentary action; it is the pride and the difficulty of his art: The improver can only prepare the ſcene in general, and leave it to chance how the figures may be diſpoſed. This circumſtance of continued motion, has, in my opinion, as little to do with the affinity between painting and gardening, as with their reſpective ſuperiority. What does it then prove? what I am ſorry to ſay there are but too many proofs of already—a deſire of pointing out, on every occaſion, what might in any way be thought to depreciate that art, which you have unfortunately choſen to conſider as a rival one.

The only example you have given of a mere object of ſight, incapable, at any moment, of being painted, is a view down a

ſteep

ſteep hill. That is, (if I comprehend it) the *immediate and uninterrupted progreſs* of the deſcent; for the *general* effect of looking down from a height on lower objects, has been perpetually expreſſed in painting. This deficiency of the art (ſuch as it is) has been frequently cited as an argument againſt the affinity between painting and landſcape gardening; but in what manner it applies, I have not been able to diſcover. If it could be proved, that in the eye of a lover of painting, what was incapable of being expreſſed upon canvas, was *therefore* incapable of giving pleaſure, the argument would be unanſwerable; it otherwiſe hardly deſerves an anſwer. As lovers of painting (unleſs I am ſtrangely miſtaken) never judge by ſo abſurd a rule, but by the general principles of the art, the only queſtion will be, whether thoſe general principles can be applied to a view down a ſteep hill, *though* it be incapable of being

being actually repreſented. Can it be doubted, whether the ſtyle of the immediate fore-ground and every part of it—the diſpoſition and character of the trees quite down to the roots—the effects of light and ſhadow—the harmony of the colours—the whole of the compoſition, may not be judged of in that, juſt as in any other landſcape? And let me aſk you, whether you would not think a painter tolerably affected, who, if his opinion were deſired of all thoſe particulars, were to anſwer, that he could not judge of them at all, nor of any ſcene in *that direction*, for it was incapable of being painted. Had I not ſo often heard this circumſtance mentioned, and with great triumph, by the adverſaries of painting, I ſhould be aſhamed of having ſaid ſo much about an impoſſibility, that ſeems to have no more to do with the application of the principles of painting to objects of ſight, or with the affinity between

painting

painting and gardening, than the impoſſibility of painting real ſounds, real ſmells, or real motion.*

When

* I did not intend to have ſaid any thing more on the ſubject of this deficiency, but it has ſince been taken up, and connected with a doctrine, which, if true, would certainly give weight to the argument that has been drawn from it. This doctrine is, that the chief, or rather the only way in which the art of painting can be uſeful to that of gardening, is by making repreſentations of the parts to be improved: and thence it is inferred, that where ſuch repreſentations (from whatever cauſe) cannot be made, the painter has no other method of explaining his ideas, or giving directions, ſo that, according to the words of Mr. Maſon, "the inſtructor leaves his pupil in the lurch, "where aſſiſtance is moſt required;" that is, (for no other deficiency is mentioned) where it is required to form a judgment of the diſpoſition and effect of objects as they appear to the ſpectator when he is looking down a ſteep hill. In order to ſhew that the doctrine juſt mentioned is mine, Mr. Maſon has made uſe of a very eaſy, but neither a very candid, nor ingenious method of perverting an author's meaning—that of adding ſome words of his own to part of a ſentence of mine. I had ſaid, that "the landſcapes of great painters are the only models that approach to perfection;"* he has left out the reſt of the ſentence, which explained and limited my meaning, and has added "for deſigners of real ſcenery to work by."† I ſhall make no further comment on ſuch a ſtyle of criticiſm, but ſhall proceed to ſay a few more words on this deficiency in the art of painting.

The greateſt oppoſers of the alliance between that art, and

* Eſſay on the Picturesque, p. 8 of the firſt edit. p. 9 of the ſecond.

† Eſſay on Deſign in Gardening, by Mr. G, Maſon, page 189.

When I reflect upon the whole of your Letter, I cannot help being ſtruck with the very ſingular contraſt between your profeſſions at the beginning of it, and the whole tenor of it afterwards. You ſet out by agreeing with me in the general principles of your art, which general principles, according to my doctrine, are preciſely thoſe

the art of gardening, would probably allow, that the owner of a place might liſten with attention and intereſt to the remarks of a painter, on the manner in which many groups of trees might be broken, or united; or in which parts of the diſtance might be let in, or ſhut out; on the pictureſque effect which projecting trees, roots, ſtones, and broken ground, with a torrent forcing its way among them, had on the eye when viewed from below. On all theſe points he might think his hints and obſervations very juſt; but ſhould they afterwards get to the top of the ſame bank, and look *down* the courſe of the torrent, and ſhould the painter *then* attempt to expatiate on the ſame effects reverſed—the owner, according to Mr. Maſon, might ſtop him ſhort, and tell him,---You muſt leave this to me, and my gardener, for you know you cannot repreſent this view in a picture, exactly as it appears to us looking at it from the brink of the precipice; and *therefore* you can have no idea yourſelf, and can give me no idea, how it ſhould be improved, or what ſhould, or ſhould not, be done. If the painter thought it worth his while to anſwer ſuch a reaſoner, he would not be at a loſs for arguments, but he probably would do as I ſhall now—not ſay another word on the ſubject.

of

of painting: you alſo allow, that the ſtudy of what the higher artiſts have done (in other words, the ſtudy of thoſe principles in their works) is eſſential to your profeſſion. After ſuch an exordium, I hoped and expected, that you would briefly have given a general idea (which, in your great work, you might explain more at large) in what points this ſtudy would be uſeful, and in what it could not be applied, with the reaſons deduced from practical experience. This (if you entered upon the ſubject at all) would have been a liberal and candid manner of treating it, which, without obliging you to go into a long detail, might have enlightened your readers: but, in the very next page, you ſeem to dread the force of the conceſſions you had made, and begin your attack on the affinity between gardening and painting; the ſtudy of which laſt, you had juſt conſidered as ſo eſſential. In the ſucceeding page, the attack proceeds with

more violence. The painter's landſcape, inſtead of being ſtudied for the purpoſe of improving the landſcapes of the place, is to be hung up, *a la Hollandoiſe*, at the end of the avenue; it is made uſe of as a ſort of *ſcape-goat*, on which all the picturesque ſins of the place are to be diſcharged, and by means of which, the reſt of the grounds may be freed from all painter-like effects, and the poſſeſſor ſecured from colds, agues, and the blue devils. Soon afterwards, the uncontrouled opinions of ſavages are brought in to illuſtrate the ſtudies of painters; an acquaintance with which (and no ſlight one) you acknowledge not only to be eſſential to your art, but that without it, you ſhould never have preſumed to arrogate to yourſelf the title of Landſcape-Gardener. The attack upon painting is then ſuſpended during ſeveral pages, the offenſive war being changed to a defenſive one, in ſupport of your ally Mr. Brown. But in the 18th page

you

you open your battery again, with an illuſtration ſtill more degrading to the art than that of the ſavages: I need not put our readers in mind of it; they will immediately recollect the compariſon between the love of pictures, and of tobacco. You cloſe the whole argument (in which, after the two firſt pages, not a ſyllable is ſaid in favour of an art to which you are ſo much indebted) with an account of its deficiencies, in not being able to repreſent a gravel walk, a fragrant ſhrubbery, an extenſive proſpect, or a view down a ſteep hill; to which catalogue may be added continual motion.

I muſt ſay, that, according to your repreſentation of the art of painting, its powers and effects, you, as an improver, have totally thrown away your time in ſtudying what the higher artiſts have done in their pictures and drawings; and ſtill more ſo, if it be conſidered, that the pictureſque is to be baniſhed

niſhed from improved places. If you take the term pictureſque in a very uſual ſenſe, as ſignifying *painter-like*, that is, *as giving an idea of ſuch combinations of form, colour, and light and ſhadow, or of any one of them, as ſtrike artiſts, though they may not pleaſe a common obſerver*, (and which therefore might not be ill diſtinguiſhed by ſome ſuch word as painter-like) the baniſhing of ſuch effects muſt make the ſtudy of the higher artiſts totally uſeleſs. If again you take pictureſque in my ſtricter, but far from contradictory ſenſe of it—as deſcribing what is rough and abrupt, with ſudden deviations —the baniſhing of all ſuch objects, will render the above-mentioned ſtudy of almoſt as little uſe; for even in the works of thoſe painters who have moſt ſtudied the beautiful, you will have difficulty in finding many inſtances of it totally detached from the pictureſque.

As,

As, according to my notions, your art very much depends on mixing in proper degrees, and according to circumſtances, the two characters, and in ſome caſes on preſerving them nearly unmixed—and as ſome confuſion is likely to ariſe from the term beautiful being made uſe of both in a general and a confined ſenſe, I will here add a few remarks to what I have ſaid in my Eſſay, which may help to clear up a ſubject, whoſe chief difficulties (like thoſe of many others) have ariſen from the uncertain and licentious uſe of words.

It ſeems to me, that the term *beautiful*, in its moſt general and extended acceptation, is applied to all that allures, attracts, or pleaſes the eye in every ſtyle. It is applied to rocks, precipices, rugged old trees, torrents, &c. as well as to ſhrubs, flowers, meadows, and gentle ſtreams, and that in the moſt indiſcriminate manner; to gay and

brilliant colours, however diſcordant, for they are highly attractive; and for the ſame reaſon to peculiar and ſtriking, though unconnected and incongruous forms.

Its general acceptation among painters and lovers of painting, is, I believe, no leſs extended, but with this difference—that they apply the principles of painting to theſe various ſtyles, and call beautiful, in its extended ſenſe, whatever has a connection and union of form, colour, and light and ſhadow.

'Tis ſtill one principle thro' all extends,
And leads thro' different ways to different ends.
Whate'er its eſſence, or whate'er its name,
Whate'er its modes, 'tis ſtill in all the ſame:
'Tis juſt congruity of parts combin'd,
To pleaſe the ſenſe, and ſatisfy the mind.*

This union, this harmony, this connection, this breadth, this congruity of parts, may be conſidered as one principle, and it ſeems to be the grand principle neceſſary to all

* The Landſcape, p. 2. v. 35.

ſtyles;

ſtyles; and therefore what poſſeſſes it, though purely ſublime, or purely pictureſque, is called by that title of higheſt and moſt favoured excellence, *Beauty*, as well as what is more ſtrictly beautiful. On this account, objections have been made to my diſtinction, and even that of Mr. Burke, as too narrow and confined; but I believe the diſpute is, as uſual, about names.

Beauty is, in one ſenſe, a collective idea, and includes the ſublime as well as the pictureſque: In the other, it is confined to particular qualities, which diſtinguiſh it from the two other characters, juſt as *their* particular qualities diſtinguiſh them alſo from *it*, and from each other. Virtue, in the ſame manner, is ſometimes a collective idea of many qualities; ſometimes, as with reſpect to women, confined to the ſingle one of chaſtity; or, as anciently, with reſpect to men, to that of courage: in ſhort, to what

what was moſt eſteemed in either ſex. Virtue therefore ſeems to be in a moral and metaphyſical light, preciſely what beauty is with regard to ſenſible objects; and no one, I imagine, who underſtands modern, or ancient languages, will venture to aſſert, that *becauſe* there is a collective idea of virtue, therefore there is no confined idea annexed to the word. The qualities of union, harmony, connection, &c. are not peculiar to the beautiful as diſtinct from the ſublime, or the pictureſque; they are qualities common to them all; they are general, not diſcriminating qualities; they are neceſſary to give effect to the diſtinct and peculiar qualities of each of thoſe characters, but do not therefore deſtroy, or confound them.

For inſtance, a number of broken rocks, and rugged old trees, with a ſtony torrent daſhing among them, are all *ingredients* of the

the picturesque—of the sublime—or of both. These, perhaps, may be so unhappily mixed together, as to produce little or no effect; but should they be ever so happily united, either in nature or painting, will they *therefore* become beautiful in the confined sense? In like manner, smooth undulating ground, fresh verdure and foliage, tender blossoms and flowers, are all ingredients of the beautiful. These also may be so ill combined (and of examples there is no scarcity) as to have but little effect; yet should these *alone* be ever so happily united, will they therefore become sublime, or picturesque in the confined sense? or, I may almost say, in any sense?

As these are very material points in this discussion, I will request your indulgence, and that of my other readers, for what always has need of it—description of scenery. I will endeavour (though well aware what

I risque

I riſque in the undertaking) to expreſs a certain combination of natural objects, which, as nearly as the caſe will allow, may anſwer to my idea of *unmixed* beauty; and likewiſe to point out the difference between that, and a ſcene merely pictureſque, as alſo the difference between both of them, and a ſcene of Mr. Brown's.

It muſt be remembered, however, that many of the moſt ſtrictly beautiful objects in nature, have a mixture of roughneſs in ſome parts, which of courſe cannot be ſeparated from them, and which mixture, as I remarked in my Eſſay,* ſhould ſerve as a leſſon to improvers, not to aim at ſuch a ſeparation in their general ſyſtem. I muſt therefore premiſe, that the ſimply beautiful ſcene I ſhall attempt to deſcribe, is by no means intended to recommend an affected ſelection of ſuch objects as have moſt of the

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 125 and 128.

ſeparate

ſeparate qualities of beauty; but to ſhew, that even *with* ſuch an affected ſelection, and with as ſtudied an excluſion of whatever has any of the ſeparate qualities of the pictureſque,* a ſcene might be formed, to which, I truſt, the painter would not have the ſame objection as to one of Mr. Brown's; though he might not call it pictureſque, or chuſe it for the ſubject of a landſcape.

I eaſily conceive, that a perſon who is very much ſtruck with a ſcene that exhibits the varied, and ſtrongly marked effects of broken ground; of ſudden projections, and deep hollows; of old twiſted trees, with furrowed bark; of water tumbling in a deep-worn channel over rocks and rude ſtones, and half loſt among ſhaggy roots, decaying ſtumps, and withered fern; and who views the whole in ſome favourable moment of light and ſhadow,—may very naturally call that whole *beautiful*; for he gives to what ſo much

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 61.

pleaſes

pleaſes him, the epithet which conveys the higheſt commendation.

But ſuppoſe that, at the extremity of ſuch a ſcene, he were to enter a glade, or a ſmall valley of the ſofteſt turf and fineſt verdure; the ground on each ſide ſwelling gently into knolls, with other glades and receſſes ſtealing in between them; the whole adorned with trees of the ſmootheſt and tendereſt bark, and moſt elegant forms, mixed with tufts of various evergreens and flowering ſhrubs: all theſe growing as luxuriantly as in garden mould, yet diſpoſed in as looſe and artleſs groups as thoſe in foreſts; whilſt a natural pathway led the eye amidſt theſe intricacies, and towards the other glades and receſſes. Suppoſe a clear and gentle ſtream to flow through this retirement, on a bed of the pureſt gravel or pebbles; its bank ſometimes ſmooth and level, ſometimes indented and varied in height and form, and in parts even abrupt.

abrupt, and the ſoil appearing; but all rudeneſs concealed by tufts of flowers, trailing plants, and others of low growth, hanging over the clear water; the broken tints of the ſoil ſeen only through their boughs as through a veil, and juſt giving a warmth and variety to the reflexions. Imagine that ſoon after, this brook (according to that beautiful image in Milton)

> ..... ſpread
> Into a liquid plain, then ſtood unmov'd,
> Pure as the expanſe of heaven:

that over this lake, in ſome parts, trees of the moſt pleaſing form and foliage extended their branches, while the vine, the honeyſuckle, and other climbers, hung from them in looſe feſtoons, almoſt into the water: that in other parts the trees retired farther back, and the turf came quite to the brink, and almoſt level with its ſurface: that further on, the bank ſwelled more ſuddenly, and

was

was partially fringed and crowned with ſuch plants as are moſt admired for beauty of leaves and flowers; and that amidſt them, ſmooth ſtones of different forms and ſizes, but their ſurface ſometimes varied and ſoftened by the rich velvet of moſſes, mixed their mellow and brilliant tints with thoſe of the flowers, and the general hue of vegetation; while the whole was rendered more ſoft and enchanting by the clear mirror that reflected them.

After having viewed ſuch a ſcene, let him return at once to the former one; would he then give it the ſame epithet he did before? I think he would ſenſibly feel, that the character of each was as diſtinct as their cauſes, and that a ſcene compoſed almoſt entirely of objects, rough, rugged, abrupt, and angular, with various marks of age and decay, and without one freſh and tender colour, could never be claſſed with another

ſcene,

ſcene, where ſoftneſs, flow of outline, luxuriancy of vegetation, freſhneſs and tenderneſs of colour, characterized every object.

Again, (to ſhew how much the accidents of light and ſhadow heighten or diminiſh the peculiar character of each ſcene, according to their own character) ſuppoſe, that while he was viewing the rude ſcene, a ſudden gleam of ſunſhine glanced on the rugged trunks, and pierced into the receſſes of the torrent, while catching lights were ſhifting upon the fern, the projecting roots, and broken ground; and that behind the moſſy ſtagheaded trees, dark clouds aroſe, with breaks between them into the blue ſky: the whole would then be infinitely more ſtriking. In the other ſcene, however, though ſuch a ſky, with ſuch lights, would alſo have a *ſtriking* effect, yet, from the irritation which always attends ſudden contraſts, it would take off from its repoſe, its calm

 delight;

delight; in a word, from its beauty:* but let it be viewed under the influence of a warm ſetting ſun, or the mild glow of twilight, and then each ſcene will have the accompaniment that moſt ſuits, and heightens its character.

Having thus ſeparated the two characters, try what would be the effect of uniting them. Smooth part of the banks in the rough ſcene—mix luxuriant trees, flowering plants, and freſh foliage with the gnarled and half decaying oaks—add ſtill-water and reflexions to the noiſy torrent—and you will feel how beauty will advance, as pictureſqueneſs retires. Again, break the banks in the other ſcene, and make thoſe breaks more viſibly abrupt—place ſome of the rough oaks, among the ſmoother and freſher trees—take away the ſhrubs—and let the water daſh among rude ſtones—and

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, chap. 6. part 1.

you

you can have no doubt that you would loſe in beauty, what you would gain in pictureſqueneſs.

But ſhould Mr. Brown come, and level the banks in both ſcenes to one ſmooth edge, clump the trees, dam up all the water, and make every thing diſtinct, hard, and unconnected—the beautiful and the pictureſque would equally diſappear, and the inſipid and the formal alone remain.

I ſhall here wiſh to enlarge upon ſome few points, in which, I believe, the deſign and purport of my Eſſay have by many people been totally miſconceived: at the ſame time I know how difficult it is to guard againſt, or to correct ſuch falſe ideas; particularly when they are cheriſhed by thoſe, who, perhaps, have been too ready to adopt them. In matters of greater conſequence, wherever party runs high, he who expreſſes warmly his love of freedom, and

hatred of deſpotiſm—however carefully he may diſtinguiſh freedom from licentiouſneſs, and deſpotiſm from limited monarchy—muſt never hope for candour: he will be treated by zealots, as a friend to anarchy and confuſion, as an enemy to all order and regularity, as one who would wiſh to ſee mankind in what is called a ſtate of nature. In the ſame manner, from ſpeaking warmly of certain wild unpoliſhed ſcenes, I have been repreſented as a perſon, who, had I the power, would deſtroy all the comforts of a place; all gravel walks and ſhrubberies (in which caſe it would at leaſt be proper to begin with my own) would allow no mowing, but wet every body in high graſs,—tear their clothes with brambles and briars,—and ſend them up to their knees through dirty lanes between two cart-ruts. Though I expected a good deal of this kind of miſconception, yet it ſeemed to me quite unneceſſary to re-

recommend thoſe comforts which every body was fond of, and with great reaſon; eſpecially as I was not treating of the garden, but of the grounds. My point was to ſhew, that there were many ſtriking circumſtances in nature, which were either neglected, or deſtroyed, from a narrow excluſive attachment to high poliſh; and alſo from extending that poliſh too far, and with too little attention to beauty in its more general and enlarged ſenſe.

As, notwithſtanding theſe miſconceptions, my book has been more favourably received than I had any reaſon to expect, I will enter into ſome little detail (not very amuſing I fear) on the ſubject of thoſe comforts; and it is a ſubject, which cannot be more properly diſcuſſed than in a letter addreſſed to you.

In this climate, particularly, gravel walks are indiſpenſible; and neatneſs and ſymme-

try require, that in the moſt dreſſed parts they ſhould be of uniform breadths, and conſequently between two regular borders. On that account, however uſeful and even ornamental, they cannot have the playful variety of a path; which, in my idea, is owing, not merely to the variety of its curves, but to the lines of thoſe curves being ſoftened into the untrodden graſs, and the tranſitions inſenſibly made: for thence proceed, what Hogarth calls the waving lines that lead the eye a kind of wanton chace, and to which diſtinctneſs puts an immediate end. Were a gardener, for inſtance, to copy, as nearly as poſſible, *all* the waving lines of a path, and to make them as diſtinct as thoſe of a gravel walk, nothing could be more abſurd and unnatural.

The whole of this principle is admirably exemplified in the remark of Annibal Caracci, on the different ſtyles of painting (not drawing)

drawing) of Raphael and Correggio. He was ſo ſtruck with theſe inſenſible tranſitions in the works of Correggio, that, in a letter to his couſin Ludovico, he ſaid, "That St. Paul of "Raphael, which I formerly looked upon as "a miracle, now ſeems to me a thing of "wood; ſo hard it is, and ſo cutting." It muſt be remembered alſo, that this was the judgment, not of a mere colouriſt, but of one whoſe ſtyle of drawing was remarkable for its firmneſs and preciſion. If, therefore, ſuch a painter may be ſuppoſed to have juſt ideas on the ſubject, a pathway (for no object is trifling which clearly ſhews the principle) has more of the requiſites of beauty, than any walk with diſtinct edges. Still, however, the gravel walk, from its ſymmetry, its neatneſs, and its dreſſed appearance, accords much more with what is ſoft and beautiful, than with what is rude and pictureſque. For example, were the ſimply beautiful ſcene which I have

juſt deſcribed, cloſe to a gentleman's houſe, he would very naturally make a regular gravel walk through it, and he would do very right; for convenience, neatneſs, and a dreſſed appearance, are in ſuch caſes among the firſt conſiderations. But then, according to the doctrine I have endeavoured to eſtabliſh, ſuch a walk would not improve the *beauty* of the ſcene, though it would give it, what, on another principle, is highly pleaſing: On the contrary, however well it might be managed, however artfully carried among the trees and ſhrubs, and partially concealed and broken by them, ſtill the lines of it would ſtiffly cut acroſs every thing, and never, like thoſe of the pathway, play as it were into the other objects, and inſenſibly ſteal among them. It was on that account I obſerved, that near the houſe picturesque beauty (for in that early part of my Eſſay I had made no objection to the term) muſt often be

ſacrificed

ſacrificed to neatneſs; but that it was a *ſacrifice*, and one which ſhould not wantonly be made.* Now, I believe, there are a number of perſons who, were they rich enough, would have regular gravel walks in every part of their whole place; and ſhould they make them in ſuch a ſcene as I have been mentioning, at a diſtance from the houſe, I ſhould think it a *wanton* ſacrifice; for a dry path without borders would anſwer every purpoſe of convenience, without taking off from the retired character of the place. In a *rude* ſcene, the ſacrifice would be much greater, for ſymmetry and regularity are particularly adverſe to the pictureſque.†

With regard to a natural path, either through a meadow, or acroſs more intricate ground, it is, I believe, very generally popular; a bye-road, from an idea of ruts and

* Eſſay on the Pictureſque, page 37.

† ..... page 64.

mire,

mire, very naturally much leſs ſo; though the principal diſtinction between both of them, and whatever has a regular border, is the ſame. There are, however, bye-roads in dry ſoils, upon a level ſurface, and where there are few heavy carriages, that to me have a remarkably cheerful look; and ſo far are they from giving an idea of any thing ſlovenly, that the manner in which the ſoil (whether ſand or gravel) and the graſs are preſſed and blended together, has rather the appearance of an operation of great nicety and attention. I ſhould think, therefore, that in all ſcenery at ſome diſtance from the houſe, (particularly of the wilder kind) ſuch roads and paths would anſwer every purpoſe of comfort and convenience, without formality: they might be dug out, and ſtoned juſt like any other gravel walk or road, only have no diſtinct borders; and what would be a great additional motive, they would give

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an idea that the *general* ſoil was dry: whereas the *borders* always ſeem to indicate that the gravel extends no farther, and was brought there on purpoſe.

All the ſame principles hold good with reſpect to mowing. It is a very common obſervation, that ſheep are the beſt gardeners, and it is a very juſt one: the operation of the ſcythe, like that of the ſpade, is always diſtinct and uniform; whereas the bite of ſheep has the ſame kind of effect on the general face of the graſs, that the conſtant tread of animals produces on the borders of paths and roads: it leaves ſlight inequalities, (in a way which the ſcythe cannot imitate) even on the moſt cloſely bitten turf, and on the ſides of banks many tufts of flowers untouched; all which gives play and variety to the ſurface. A pleaſure-ground can hardly be too nicely mowed, but ſome of the circumſtances of a ſheep-walk might well be imitated

imitated in particular parts of it, and eſpecially on banks, or what are called garden ſlopes. Theſe, when bare, and cloſe ſhaven, have a remarkably cold, naked, and *hard* appearance:* dug clumps on their ſides give them a bliſtered look, and deſtroy that play of outline and eaſy tranſition, which never ſhould be neglected; but were holes made in them of different ſizes, from that of a clump to a ſingle plant, and where the ſoil itſelf was not excellent, filled with rich mould, and no longer dug, when the plants had taken root—not only the lower ſhrubs, but tufts of flowers might be ſo diſperſed (yet ſtill connected, and with room to mow between them) that every part of the bank would have the play and variety of wild, and the poliſh of dreſſed nature.

The whole that has been ſaid on the ſubject of diſtinct lines, applies in a much

* Eſſay on the Picturesque, page 108.

ſtronger

ſtronger manner to the boundaries of water. One great reaſon for having borders to a gravel walk is, that the operations of hoeing and weeding, (ſo neceſſary to high keeping,) may be regularly and exactly carried on: but water needs no operation of that kind. The very purpoſe of a walk makes it inconvenient to have many boughs extended beyond its edge: but they may extend over water without any inconvenience; and there, beſides their breaking the too long continuance of a line, they furniſh objects of reflexion: a very material difference between that and a walk. In dreſſed walks and roads, though the curves of paths, and of bye-roads, might give hints for correcting their too great ſameneſs, yet the ſweeps muſt in a great degree be regular; and a number of inlets would be ridiculous and inconvenient where you are to walk: but in the banks of water, coves and inlets, with their abruptneſſes and irregularities, may be partially

partially concealed and diſguiſed; and, if not too frequent, will produce great variety, without any unpleaſant break in the outline.

To return from this minute detail, to general diſtinctions and principles; all the reflexions I have made, ſince I publiſhed my Eſſay, have confirmed me in my opinion, that whatever be the name applied to objects, the beautiful, and the pictureſque, muſt remain as ſeparate as their reſpective qualities; as ſeparate as rough and ſmooth, as abrupt and gradual. But though it is neceſſary that the improver ſhould know their diſtinct natures, juſt as the painter muſt know his diſtinct colours before he mixes them, yet it is not on their *conſtant* ſeparation, as you have propoſed, but on blending them as circumſtances may point out, that your art muſt greatly depend: ſtill more however on the thorough knowledge and the application of thoſe higher principles of

union.

union, connection, &c. by means of which, all the characters of viſible nature are, as it were, incorporated, into one general title of excellence.

The joint compliment you have paid to my friend and me, I can for my own part return with great ſincerity; and, on this occaſion, I dare ſay I may anſwer for Mr. Knight. I fear, however, that as you complain of the occaſional aſperity of my ſuppoſed remarks on your opinions, you will not think me grown milder in this open and continued controverſy; for in the courſe of pointing out and explaining the tendency of many indirect attacks and inſinuations, which at firſt ſight might not be obvious, ſome degree of ſharpneſs in my anſwer would naturally ariſe: but he who writes a formal challenge, muſt not expect a billet-doux in return. I may alſo obſerve, that every man (whatever the game may be) has

has his particular manner of playing; an alluſion, which may not unaptly be applied to writing. I have been told by ſome of my friends, that my play is ſharp; I believe it may be ſo; but were I to endeavour to alter it, I could not play at all. I truſt, however, that my friends will vouch for me, that whatever ſharpneſs there may be in my ſtyle, there is no rancour in my heart.

On reading over what I have written, I could not but lament that there ſhould be any controverſy between us. Controverſy at beſt is but a rough game, and in ſome points not unlike the ancient tournaments; where friends and acquaintance, merely for a trial of ſkill, and love of victory, with all civility and courteſy tilted at each others breaſts—tried to unhorſe each other—grew more eager and animated—drew their ſwords—ſtruck where the armour was weakeſt, and where the ſteel would bite to the quick—and all without

without animoſity. As theſe doughty combatants of the days of yore, after many a hard blow given and received, met together in perfect cordiality at the famous round tables; ſo I hope we often ſhall meet at the tables of our common friends. And as they, forgetting the ſmarts of their mutual wounds, gaily diſcourſed of the charms of beauty, of feats of arms, of various ſtratagems of war, of the diſpoſition of troops, the choice of ground, and ambuſcades in woods and ravines---ſo we may talk of the many correſpondent diſpoſitions and ſtratagems in your milder art; of its broken picturesque ravines, of the intricacies and concealments of woods and thickets, and of all its ſofter, and more generally attractive beauties.

Though I have already, perhaps, dwelt too long on that great principle, Connection, yet I cannot conclude this Letter without mentioning an example of its effects in a more important ſphere. Not that its ef-

 fects

fects are doubtful, but that it is an example by no means unapplicable to the ſubject on which I have been writing, and one that, in the preſent criſis, cannot be too much impreſſed on our minds.

The mutual connection and dependance of all the different ranks and orders of men in this country; the innumerable, but voluntary ties by which they are bound and united to each other, (ſo different from what are experienced by the ſubjects of any other monarchy,) are perhaps the firmeſt ſecurities of its glory, its ſtrength, and its happineſs. Freedom, like the general atmoſphere, is diffuſed through every part, and its ſteady and ſettled influence, like that of the atmoſphere on a fine evening, gives at once a glowing warmth, and a union to all within its ſphere: and although the ſeparation of the different ranks and their gradations, like thoſe of viſible objects, is known and aſcertained, yet from the beneficial mixture,

mixture, and frequent intercommunication of high and low, that ſeparation is happily diſguiſed, and does not ſenſibly operate on the general mind. But ſhould any of theſe moſt important links be broken; ſhould any ſudden gap, any diſtinct undiſguiſed line of ſeparation be made, ſuch as between the noble and the roturier, the whole ſtrength of that firm chain (and firm may it ſtand) would at once be broken.

May the ſtrength of that exalted principle, whoſe effects I have ſo much enlarged upon, enable us to cultivate this and every other art of peace in full ſecurity, whatever ſtorms threaten us from without; and as it ſo happily pervades the true ſpirit of our government and conſtitution, may it no leſs prevail in all our plans for embelliſhing the outward face of this noble kingdom,

..... Till Albion ſmile
One ample theatre of ſylvan grace.*

I will

* This line has, I believe, been often quoted, and always as deſcriptive of the happy effects of modern gardening on the

I will now conclude this long comment on your Letter, and as it is the firſt, ſo I hope it will be the laſt time of my addreſſing you in this public manner; in every private intercourſe and communication, I ſhall always feel great ſatisfaction.

I am, Sir,

Your moſt obedient

Humble ſervant,

UVEDALE PRICE.

the general face of the country: to me it appears to have exactly the oppoſite tendency, and for that reaſon I have made uſe of it; though I hope it will not be thought that, like Panurge, I am always crying *au rebours.* I by no means, however, conceive that Mr. Maſon intended, by *ſylvan* grace, to inculcate ſuch a doctrine, as that all parts of an improved place ſhould be wild, in thickets, and free from every appearance of art; but that the general features and outline of the place ſhould be ſo far ſylvan, as not to be disjoined from the ſurrounding objects. This ſingle word *ſylvan,* added to many other inſtances throughout his poem, is to me a plain indication that Mr. Maſon had, in his idea, a much more free, connected, and painter-like ſtyle of improvement, than he had ſeen practiſed by any of thoſe, whoſe works he had juſt recommended to his reader's attention.

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